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THE CHINESE CRISIS FROM WITHIN

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THE CHINESE CRISIS FROM WITHIN

BY

WEN CHING

Lin, Wên-ch'ing
// Lin Boon Keng

EDITED BY

REV. G. M. REITH, M.A.

EDINBURGH

LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
9, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.
1901

1929

DS771
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193931

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PREFACE

THE following remarkable and instructive articles, now issued in book form, appeared in the *Singapore Free Press* while the Chinese crisis was in its acute stage last year. It was justly thought that their matter and their merit would appeal to a larger public than that which could be reached by a colonial newspaper. Their interest lies in the fact that they present recent events in China as they appear to a native of that country, who, though widely read in European literature, and sympathetic towards western thought and culture, is none the less a Chinaman, and a patriotic one. The Chinese upheaval has produced, as was inevitable, a flood of literature bearing on the subject, but nothing that has yet appeared sets the internal and external difficulties of the Chinese Empire in so fresh and instructive a light as these articles do. They trace the troubles to their source in the unhappy situation created by the political and social domination of an unprogressive and semi-barbarous race, the Manchus, over a civilised and progressive one, the Chinese proper.

Many things in the book will be new to the majority of English readers, *e.g.* the fact that the population of China is not homogeneous, the rapid progress of western ideas and methods amongst the Chinese in recent times, and the skilful way in which the Court of Pekin has played all these years with European diplomacy.

Since the articles were originally written for a newspaper, and, following the march of events in China at an exciting period, dealt with the various personages involved as they came into prominence, without any definite order or plan, it was considered necessary that they should be rearranged, revised, and edited before publication in permanent form. The task of editing them was entrusted to me, with the author's consent.

The plan of rearrangement I have adopted is, in a word, this: To introduce the reader first to the reform movement in China under the pressure of western civilisation; then to present the author's graphic picture of the reactionary Manchu Court, the Empress-Dowager Tzu Hsi and her infamous satellites; and finally to bring together the writer's views on the past and present relations of China to foreign diplomacy, and as to the future settlement. The overlapping and repetitions, referred to by the author in his preface, rendered necessary by the exigencies of newspaper publication, have been to a large extent removed in the revision. Beyond a few sentences introduced here and there for the sake of connection, an occasional modification of statements in the light of more recent events, and some slight verbal changes, the text remains as it came from the author's pen. It is impossible to read his work without a feeling of surprise and admiration at Wen Ching's mastery of our language and literature, and his wonderful acquaintance with western thought and history. There are few Europeans who could be so completely at home in an oriental language as this learned Chinaman is in what is admittedly the most difficult of occidental tongues. A few notes have been added to explain some terms and allusions in the text, the purport of which might escape the English reader.

mar the general truthfulness of the picture. Without the facilities of a proper library, he could scarcely hope to escape inaccuracies, which he trusts are not serious. A Chinaman who essays to write in the English language can hardly expect to have successfully avoided blemishes of all sorts in regard to style and phraseology; and for any defects on this score the author craves the indulgence of his English readers, of whose wonderful language he stands only at the threshold.

WEN CHING

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY THE EDITOR OF THE "SINGAPORE FREE PRESS"

THE series of papers contained in this collection were written specially for the *Singapore Free Press* during the earlier course of the crisis in China. The author is a Chinaman who has had an excellent western education. For obvious political and personal reasons, his identity is to remain unknown save to myself. The reach of the Manchu knife is long, and it is known that emissaries of the Empress-Dowager came here not long ago in search of Kang Yu Wei himself, with orders to assassinate him. It is more prudent, then, that these articles, which constitute a powerful indictment of the Manchu Court of Pekin and of its chief personages, should appear under an assumed name, "Wen Ching" being that chosen by the author.

The important feature of these articles is that they are a Chinese estimate of the situation in China, and thus constitute probably the most capable and effective criticism, from a Chinese pen, that could be obtained from any quarter. It is this inner knowledge, this seeing of the situation in reverse, and through Chinese eyes, that gives to these instructive and informing papers so peculiar, indeed, so unique a nature.

Apart from the high political interest attaching to the discussions of the events and personages of the Chinese crisis, the papers on the modern reform movement in China will prove a revelation to the European student of Far-Eastern affairs; and the chapter on the work of Kang Yu Wei, "the Sage of Canton," will make known to the English public for the first time the scope, character, and influence of that great intellectual personality, whose appearance marks a grand epoch in the spontaneous advance of the China of to-day towards western literature and western modes of thought.

W. G. ST. CLAIR

SINGAPORE, *December*, 1900

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PART I

THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN CHINA

CHAPTER I

THE GROWTH OF REFORM IDEAS

NO great civilization has ever developed entirely out of native resources, however powerful may be the racial intellect or whatever may be the special gifts of the nation. The civilization of each age has always been influenced by that which preceded it, while the greatest civilizations are those which possess the power of assimilating the highest achievements of all races of mankind. For a long time it has been supposed that the Chinese civilization stood out as an isolated instance of an extensive native culture which had borrowed nothing from outsiders. Recent researches, however, have shown that even ancient China was not altogether like prehistoric Britain, which, according to Virgil, was wholly separated from the rest of the world. Though there had been intercourse between China and the West from the remotest ages, the influence of foreign countries made little or no impression on this peculiar people of the Extreme East. On the other hand, the fame of China spread long ago into the West, and silk, the richest and choicest product of this race, has from time immemorial been associated with the people and the country. The Bible contains an allusion to the land of Sinim,* which is now regarded as the equivalent of China, while Roman records and Chinese tradition refer to an embassy to the Chinese Court from the Stoic Emperor Antoninus, better known as Marcus Aurelius. At any rate, the great name of Confucius was well known in the West at a very early period.

Fifteen hundred years ago the zealous Nestorians, driven by the cruel persecutions of more powerful Christian sects, took refuge in Persia and penetrated as far as China. From fragments of history, and especially from the Chinese and Syriac text of the famous tablet discovered by the Jesuits, it appears that they were once a numerous and influential body in the "Central Kingdom." But in those days the people generally were just becoming alive to the existence of a great contemporaneous culture just outside the confines of the Empire. Buddhist missionaries were then held in high esteem; and were creating a passion for travel to unknown regions, and a thirst for the literature of other lands. The pilgrimages of Chinese priests, and the expeditions despatched by different Chinese emperors, in search of Buddhist records, are emphatic proofs that the Chinese of those days entertained no unreasonable prejudice against foreigners. The Buddhist religion of the northern school became exceedingly popular, and was the means of spreading the knowledge of outside regions. Through Buddhism the people were taught to revere foreign teachers of religion, and were led to hope for future glory in "the Western Heaven." No wonder, then, that the Nestorians found a fertile field on which to sow the gospel of the Prophet of Nazareth, burdened with the accretions acquired from the dying religions of ancient Mesopotamia. Coming as they did from the West, the missionaries were well received, and no doubt communicated to the Chinese their first definite notions of the Byzantine Empire. They seem to have had some influence among the Mongols during the supremacy of the latter, and they disappeared from China with the collapse of the dynasty founded by Kublai Khan.*

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* Cf. Isaiah xlix. 12. The reference to the Chinese here is not beyond dispute.—Ed.

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* *Circa* 1290 A.D.—Ed.

Arabs and other Asiatic races of the West had traded with China from the earliest time. They carried away the priceless silk and other fanciful products of Cathay, but have had little influence in moulding Chinese thought; though they succeeded in planting the Mohammedan religion in various parts of the empire, especially in the west. The Arabians visited Hang Chau and Canton, where there are to this day mosques and Mohammedans. The growth of Mohammedanism has been very slow, and this may be attributed to the fact that the Koran, being in Arabic, has always been out of the reach of the Chinese.

Intercourse with the Nestorians, and the Arabians, together with mediæval European travellers, of whom the Venetian Marco Polo was the best known, benefited Europe more than it did China. The silkworm was taken to Constantinople by the Nestorian monks, while chinaware, the magnetic compass, and gunpowder were introduced into Europe by Marco Polo and the Arabian merchants.

But the discovery of the sea-route to India soon brought to the shores of China the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Spaniards, and, later, the English and the French. At first foreign merchants were exceedingly humble and obsequious, being content to trade; and as long as they were allowed free scope to deal with the natives, they were quite willing to humour the mandarins. But the exactions of the Chinese officials and the cupidity and recklessness of many foreign traders soon rendered resort to arms inevitable. In all the conflicts the Chinese were worsted, and after the capture of Pekin the Manchus and their Chinese advisers recognised that the Europeans were not to be excluded from such a rich field of commerce, and resolved straightway to acquire the armaments which had rendered the foreign troops so formidable. The actions of European nations in China are naturally not seen in the same light by the natives of the land as they appear to the people of Europe. When one considers how many innocent villages and towns have been burnt or put to the sword in the different wars, reason for wonder ceases to exist at the intense antipathy of the people against foreigners. Europeans have often entertained the same kind of feeling towards the Chinese; and the Exclusion Acts adopted by America and Australia were the ultimate effects of the secret hatred lurking between the white and yellow races. It is absurd to speak of moral right in politics; the rule has always been, and ever will be, the right of the stronger to dictate to the weaker. Chinese recognise this very clearly, and perhaps we may do them the justice to believe that they are anxious to preserve their own land from foreign aggression, and to safeguard their homes from ruthless invaders. The Chinese know that foreigners take advantage of their weakness to saddle upon them intolerable burdens. How can they forget that in return for their commerce they get a foreign yoke which is so terrible because it is irresponsible? For their gifts to the West in the shape of silk, tea, and the magnetic compass, they have so far received, in return, opium, missionaries, and bombardment. But these thoughts only trouble the higher classes, chiefly the *literati*,* the backbone of China. They are not kindly spoken of by missionaries, nor are they liked by foreigners. This is only natural. However, they have only been waiting for a leader to make a national movement to vindicate the intellectual prestige of the race.

The lower orders have always been very susceptible to the teaching of foreigners.

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* The educated class, from which all civil and military appointments are made. They have all passed certain Government examinations.—Ed.

Their ignorance and their poverty furnish ample reasons for their willingness to join the churches of the Europeans. The Roman Catholics entered China during the Mongol dynasty, only to disappear with the Nestorians. But when the native Mings* had again consolidated the empire, the Jesuits appeared on the scene, and continued to rise in influence until, in the succeeding dynasty, they reached the climax of their power. In the reign of K'ang Hsi,† the wisest and greatest ruler of the present reigning house, the Jesuits actually held office in Pekin. But the arrival of the Dominicans soon ushered in a dispute which brought the Pope and the Chinese Emperor into conflict. The first Jesuits had decided that the worship of ancestors was a purely civil rite, and had obtained a papal bull to sanction this view of the question. The Dominicans, however, procured from Pope Clement XI. another decree virtually repealing the bull in favour of the Jesuits. Differences then arose between the two sects as to the right word to convey to the Chinese the idea of the Most High. The Pope was consulted by one party, while the other appealed to the Emperor. The name suggested by the Emperor was *T'ien*, or Heaven, a term sanctioned by classical usage; but the Pope interdicted the use of every other save "the Lord of Heaven." As if to further hamper the cause of Christianity and to confuse the natives, the Protestants have all refused to recognise this interpretation of the Vatican, and have during many years indulged in hot disputes over "the term question," which still remains unsettled. To add to the discomfiture of the Catholic missionaries, the tone of the papal bull was displeasing to the Manchus, and the Emperor K'ang Hsi at once gave the missionaries the alternative of accepting his own views, or of leaving his dominion. Persecution broke out here and there, and for the first time the Christian religion acquired the odium of being a sort of secret society inimical to the State, a bad name which has stuck to it until the present day. The Roman Catholics thus brought the name of Christianity into disrepute through their political intrigues; and the tactics of some Protestant missionaries have done nothing to allay the suspicion of the mandarins, who know nothing of foreign countries. It must be very difficult for the mandarins to dissociate the missionaries from the secular power whose gunboats seem ever ready to appear on behalf of the priests. The German capture of Kiaochau did nothing to allay the fears of the natives; but on the contrary, convinced intelligent men of the sinister relation, already suspected to exist, between the priests and the governments of their respective countries.

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* The Ming dynasty, which immediately preceded the present one, was a line of Chinese sovereigns—sixteen in number—who reigned from 1368 to 1644 A.D.—ED.

† K'ang Hsi, of the Tsing, or Manchu-Tartar dynasty—the present one—reigned from 1662 to 1723.—ED.

The Jesuits first introduced the elements of European science into the East. They were best known as astronomers and mathematicians, and in the time of K'ang Hsi they were engaged in correcting the errors of the Chinese calendar, and in preparing the first accurate survey of the enormous territories under the Manchu rule. But when the prejudices against them were aroused they were swept away, and the masses to-day remain ignorant alike of their evangelising efforts and of their intellectual labours on behalf of the Central Empire. They created surprise, but they touched neither the heart nor the imagination of the nation.

Protestant missionaries began their labours in China with the beginning of the nineteenth century; but it was only after the capture of Pekin by the Allies, and after protection had been wrung from the reluctant Manchus, that they commenced their propaganda with real earnestness. They have spread broadcast throughout the Empire translations of the Bible and many tracts; and through numberless schools, hospitals, and papers they have forced the Chinese to recognise the claims of Christianity to be considered one of the great religions of the world. The Roman Catholics, enriched by indemnity from the powerless Manchus, renewed their campaign with vigour, and have invaded almost every district of the Chinese Empire. The claims of missionaries to a right of travel and residence in the interior, because their religion inculcates virtue, are founded on no higher authority than an interpolation by a missionary translator into the Chinese text of the treaty between France and China. It was clearly contemplated by the Allies that missionaries were to receive protection only in the Treaty Ports and their neighbourhood; but ardent missionaries have only been too glad to take advantage of any justification for extending their sphere of work. The Chinese have watched with much concern the sequence of events: first the missionary, then the consul, and at last the invading army! They had scarcely forgotten the loss of Annam in this way, when the German action in Shantung created a profound sensation amongst all classes of the *literati*.

The great success of missionaries in China is liable to produce a wrong impression in Europe as to the causes which have led to it. Without a doubt, the first missionaries were remarkable men, distinguished alike for their unaffected piety and their learning. Moreover, they were entirely devoted to the people among whom they had elected to labour. Their efforts were early rewarded with a plentiful harvest, and they complained with apostolic earnestness that the labourers were few. But they made no impression on the *literati*, though many scholars had long ago lost all prejudices against them. The Christian religion spread chiefly, if not entirely, among the poorer people, until it was gradually discovered that political advantages accrued to the convert. It is not difficult to deny that the Christians enjoy special privileges; but the fact remains that many people in trouble seek to enter the Church. The very precautions taken by the more conscientious missionaries to ascertain whether "an inquirer" has any litigation still proceeding afford some insight into the real position of the Christian

Church in China. We cannot wonder that the Chinese officials should hate the missionaries. Their Church is an *imperium in imperio*, propagating a strange faith, and alienating the people from that of their ancestors. The missionaries are not amenable to Chinese laws, and in some cases have acted in a high-handed manner in the protection of their converts. In this lies one of the secrets of the mysterious hatred entertained against "the friends of China," as the missionaries call themselves.

Moreover, the recollection of the first attempt by the Chinese at an assimilation of the Christian religion is still fresh in the native mind. Were not the chiefs of the Taiping rebels Christians of some sort, and were they not inspired by the hope of spreading the gospel? The mission of these fanatics cost China two million lives and the devastation of one-third of the Empire.

Commerce, however, has exerted greater and more beneficial influence upon the Chinese. The opening of the Treaty Ports brought more Europeans to China, and the establishment of the Customs under foreigners led to a better understanding between the Chinese and other nations. The facilities of travel and the dearth of labour in Malaya and elsewhere have stimulated extensive emigration from China. The wealth acquired by some of these adventurers has impelled numbers to further enterprise, until the white races have been roused to see a nightmare hallucination of a *Yellow Peril*, and to shut their doors against these Mongolian hordes who appear to work without rest and to live on nothing.

Although the Christians, especially the Protestants, have forced the claims of Western culture upon the Chinese, they have probably done harm to science by their eternal preaching. Their importunity may be judged when we say that one praiseworthy evangelist did not forget to introduce the elements of Euclid with an exordium on the advantages of Christianity. The reformers have found it very difficult to remove from science and Western politics the prejudice hitherto entertained against these branches of learning through their association with Christian tracts. Successive failures in foreign wars and the increasing influence of foreigners in China emphasise to the native mind the rapid decay of the Imperial power.

The changes introduced by the Christians, the shocks caused by the many wars, and the breaches made in the great wall of prejudice by an ever-extending commerce, at length aroused the native mind, and prepared the way for the Renaissance destined yet to shake the Empire to her foundations. Time after time a great revival seems at hand, yet each attempt at renovation has always resulted in a reaction, a return to the old ways. The cause has always been the same—the evil genius of the Manchu hanging like a pall over the giant nationality. But, the nation having been roused through so many points of contact with foreigners, the movement towards the regeneration of the Empire, once started, must continue its onward march. Fitful and slow at first, the little stream gradually acquires the force of a torrent, and rushing with all the impetus of its own momentum presages destruction to those who venture to obstruct its course.

CHAPTER II

PIONEERS OF REFORM

IT was inevitable that the Manchus and Chinese should first direct their attention to the reorganisation of the army, and to the construction of a strong navy for purposes of self-defence. Soon after the peace with England and France, the Chinese Government appointed Mr. Lay, of the Customs Service, to order a flotilla of gunboats in Europe. The unfortunate attitude of this officer alienated the sympathy of the Chinese and Manchus, and the gunboats were disposed of. The organisation of the navy was postponed for many years, until it was ultimately taken up by Tso Toung-tang, in conjuction with Hsin Pao-chen, sometime viceroy of Nankin. These two men conjointly procured the services of European specialists, and with the aid especially of French engineers, created the arsenal and dockyard of Foochow. Hsin Pao-chen was the best type of the higher class Chinese, when not affected with the too common desire to enrich self at the expense of the State. He set to work with a hearty will; and conducting the service under him with Draconic severity, he soon freed his department from corruption and swindling. An incident affecting his own relatives serves well to show us the true character of the man. He discovered that some near relatives of his had been misappropriating the money of the Arsenal, and after careful inquiry to settle the guilt on the real culprits, he sentenced his own kinsman to death. It was characteristic of the Chinese that the friends of the condemned man should have approached Hsin's father, who indited a letter to his son, urging upon him to extend mercy to his kinsman. When the messenger brought the letter to the Governor of the Arsenal, he guessed the probable purport of his father's epistle. Instead of opening his father's note, he ordered the condemned man to be executed at once, in order to evade the charge of impiety for not obeying his father! The Chinese highly appreciate this form of severity, as it is so very rare for a man to be strict and harsh towards his own kith and kin. Hsin seems to have been a far-sighted man as well, for he recommended a remodelling of the civil and military examinations. Soon other men in high offices awoke to the advantages of the work started by Tso and Hsin. Chang Chi Tung* as viceroy of Canton, and Li Hung Chang in the North, gradually called into being the great Nan-Yang and Pei-Yang squadrons respectively, and these fleets were considered formidable, prior to the fatal conflict with Japan. Captain Lang directed the fleet of the North, but through the peculiar position in which he was placed, he resigned, and China lost a valuable friend and officer, who might have laid the real foundation of a great Chinese navy. The causes which led to Captain Lang's resignation explain also the failures of nearly all the new schemes adopted by China. Jealousy between foreign experts and ignorant native superior officers, bad pay for the students and officers, nepotism and a bad policy, are among the reasons which account for the miserable fiasco of China's attempt to assimilate the military and naval systems of Europe.

But a less ostentatious scheme was adopted by the veteran scholar-soldier, Tseng Kuo Fang, a truly great and noble man, one of the greatest Chinese of the present dynasty.

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* *Vide* chap. xiii.

Instead of founding arsenals and building ships, he saw that the immediate needs of the country were more light and more knowledge. With this end in view he urged upon the Government the establishment of colleges for the study of foreign tongues, and for the translation of important works from other languages. Prince Kung agreed with Tseng, and in vigorous memorials submitted a scheme which resulted in the establishment of the Tung Wen College of Pekin.* Through his efforts the work of translation proceeded apace near Shanghai, in the arsenal of Kiang-Ann; and hundreds of scientific treatises of the West were produced by three Europeans with the aid of Chinese assistants. Li Hung Chang must be favourably mentioned in his efforts towards the promotion of learning. The Tientsin University and the Naval and Military Colleges, not to speak of the Medical College and the Hospital, the first of its kind, will remain the best monuments of the greatness of Li Hung Chang. Whatever we may think of his diplomacy and his political idiosyncrasies, we cannot but declare him to be *facile princeps*, the great pioneer of true reform in China. His colleague and rival, Liu Kun-Yi, the present viceroy of Nankin, and the virtual regent of South and Central China, was not slow to take up the work of building colleges and arsenals, and amongst the reforms he introduced we may note the remodelling of the Chinese cavalry after the German style. Both Liu and Li had experience of campaigns during the Civil War; but Liu lacks the scholarship and intellectual grasp of his more famous and more powerful rival.

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* *Vide* p. 85.

Chang Chi Tung, however, will be better remembered as the pioneer of industrial reform. Although he did not neglect, in his various high appointments, to organise the army under him after the modern principle, he has all along devoted his best energy to the development of industry in China, by the adoption of European methods. There is no doubt that, in the long run, his factories and technical colleges with their workshops in Hankow will yield greater blessings and benefits to China than the more ambitious and more bellicose schemes of the viceroys Li and Liu. His steam cotton mills were the first established in China, and now from the coast near Shanghai up to Hankow, the steam engine is slowly but surely replacing human labour. A powerful writer, Chang has written against foot-binding, and against the opium habit, and has even gone so far as to condemn the style of examination essays, the famous *Wen Chang*.* This well-known viceroy was the first to establish a mint for coining silver pieces after the model of the English coins of Hongkong. He is known as the author of a pro-reform book, *Exhortations to Study*, in which the claims of western civilisation are set forth. Though the tone is favourable to foreigners, yet those who can read an esoteric meaning in difficult Chinese phrases and obscure classical allusions, assure us that the burden of the book may be rendered thus:—"Learn of the foreigners but avoid their objectionable presence!" This must be very confusing to the Chinese, and Dr. Ho Kai of Hongkong has completely shown up the Hyde and Jekyll character of this work. Recent events have confirmed the opinion that Chang Chi Tung is not a man to be depended upon to act straightforwardly, when placed between conflicting interests.

The educational mission which Yung Wing† and another conducted in America has done a good deal to bring home to the Chinese the beneficent effect of western civilisation. The young men, removed from their ancestral environment, became fascinated with American life in the cities and in the country; all of them became infected with the democratic spirit of the States, and not a few refused to return to the scenes of their early days. Through the jealousy of conservative officials the students were mostly sent back before they acquired a thorough knowledge of their different professions. The injustice done to these young men did more harm to the cause of education than it did to the students themselves. Many of these drifted into the service of foreign consuls and merchants, and only a few remain to-day in the Chinese service. But they all brought back with them a good feeling towards the Americans, and unbounded confidence in the principles of "liberty and equality," whatever these shibboleths may imply.

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* *Vide infra*, p. 59. † *Vide infra*, p. 261.

Hwang Tsun Hsien, the former Consul-General in Singapore, was a master of arts of Canton Province. He had been to Japan as attaché, and had lived in America as a Secretary of Legation. He wrote a classic work on the history of the reform movement in Japan, giving a minute account of the gradual transition of the old Japan to the new. The legal and civil, as well as the military and naval schemes, are fully detailed in this work. It is safe to say that this history, and the writings of Kang, have done for China what Voltaire's historical works did for France. They prepared the way for the new school of eclectic reformers, under the leadership of Kang Yu Wei. It will be seen later that Kang Yu Wei lays great stress on the necessity of following Japan in the methods of reform. Hwang called the attention of the Chinese to the changes which had taken place in Japan, and urged the example of the Japanese upon the Chinese people. Hwang Tsun Hsien has also been a strenuous advocate of the Natural Feet Society, and has written against foot-binding. As the provincial judge of Hunan, after leaving Singapore, he distinguished himself by the establishment of a regular police, and in influencing the Governor towards reform; through his efforts macadamised roads were laid out, and the old roads repaired according to modern ideas.

Ma Chien Chung, a former assistant of Li Hung Chang and a taotai,* wrote the first treatise on Chinese syntax, after the model of

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* The *taotai* is a Government official, the intendant of a large district or circuit. His duties vary in different districts. He generally stands between the governors and the chief magistrates or prefects of the departments.—Ed.

Kung, – a [illegible] [illegible]

European grammar. This pioneer work is necessarily abstruse and uninteresting, but it is sure to be followed by other valuable works, which must help the path of students, who at present must acquire the principles of the language without any other aid than a dictionary.

Besides these, there are many others who have done yeoman service in introducing new ideas or new inventions into the country. Mining is still far behind in development, owing to the prejudices of the people connected largely with the geomantic superstitions known as *Feng-shui.** Yung Wing wrote many years ago a memorial on the subject, and also addressed the Tsungli Yamen† on the question of building a railway with American capital raised in the form of a loan. Liu Min Chuan also memorialised in favour of railways, but he was treated as all reformers have been, with contempt and suspicion. But when he was Governor of Formosa, and the first Woosung railway was torn up, he procured the plant and laid the first railway in the island. When foreigners rushed for concessions to build railways, many Chinese began to see the value of the iron horse, and the most noted among them was Hu Ki-fen, the great admirer of England, through whose instrumentality the Pekin-Tientsin railway became a fact. Lately he was dismissed, owing to charges brought against him by reactionary officials. Sheng, taotai of Shanghai, was successful in bringing home to the Government the value of telegraphs, and is now the head of the telegraph department. One taotai, Hsu, formerly of the Foochow College, has undertaken the translation of scientific works, especially chemical treatises, while Yen Fuk, also of the same school, has rendered into Chinese Huxley's *Essay on Evolution*, an exceedingly popular work. Treatises on agriculture, on phonetics, and on all sorts of modern inventions, are now to be had in the Chinese language. As far as books are concerned, the people seem to be well equipped. In addition, we must refer to the scientific, historical, philosophical, and political works of missionaries, amongst whom the Chinese speak most approvingly of Martin, Timothy Richards, and Allen, as the men who have done most to make the Chinese acquainted with the spirit of western civilisation.

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* *Feng-shui* is a curious and elaborate system of superstitious ideas and practices, connected with the land, and bearing on the supposed effect on life and destiny of physical surroundings. One of its commonest—and for the geomancers most profitable—applications is in the selection of burying-places for the dead. See further, pp. 292, 314.—ED.

† *Vide* chap. xvi.

We have not yet referred to the Chinese Ministers abroad, except to Yung Wing, LL.D. of Yale College. The suspicions of his superiors ruined all the prospects of this excellent man. Kuo Sun-to, the first resident Minister to England, deserves to be specially mentioned as a pioneer, for although he left as his legacy only a report of his sojourn in England, yet his testimony has been of value. He condemned the Chinese mandarin system in no measured terms, and the result of his boldness was his dismissal from Pekin. The infuriated mandarins instigated the mob against him, and the unfortunate ex-minister, on his arrival at his native city, found that his house had been pulled to pieces. Such has ever been the fate of reformers in China, and such it will be until Manchurian misrule is prevented for ever from oppressing an essentially mercantile, intellectual, and peace-loving people. Although the *Pekin Gazette* is probably the oldest journal extant, yet the ordinary newspaper, as we know it, is only a thing of yesterday in China. It is said to have been originated by Wang, a Cantonese, who started the first paper in Hongkong. The Chinese only wanted to be shown the way, and before long Europeans and Chinese, or the Chinese themselves, published in Canton and Shanghai daily and weekly papers on the foreign model. Even in Singapore, the Chinese have had a couple of newspapers for a considerable time. The missionaries wield a great influence through a large number of periodicals, and some of their publications have been widely read, and have inspired many Chinese with modern, if not revolutionary, ideas.

The way was now all prepared. A leader alone was wanting. When Kang Yu Wei appeared he found a large following ready to move under his guidance, and the reform movement was transmuted from a dream into a reality.

It may be worth while to consider at this point why the efforts of the Chinese towards acquiring modern ideas have so often been futile. The question is not so easy at it seems to be at first sight. Yet the true cause is not difficult to find. Primarily, the high mandarins, who patronised the schemes, had no intention of turning out experts, whose opinions must be binding even on themselves. The true nature of technical studies was never understood, and the students were hurriedly promoted, and consequently had no chance of obtaining a thorough grasp of their subject. When we compare the number of years which the students of Japan spent in foreign schools with those passed by the Chinese students, we shall not be surprised at the failure of the latter. It is safe to say that all Chinese who have had sufficient time to study European science have given a good account of their acquirements; but the majority were unable to acquire a satisfactory knowledge of their profession, chiefly on account of a defective knowledge of the European languages. Another ridiculous practice of the mandarins is to turn out a sort of professional Jack-of-all-trades. A student is put on board a training ship to learn the duties of a middy, then he is taken on shore to learn languages, and at last he is attached to the suite of an ambassador. The writer knows personally two distinguished naval officers who obtained Government sanction to study law just when they were fit to put into practice the theory of navigation and the other sciences which they had learned. Should war break out, these unfortunate lawyers would be called upon to handle ironclads and fight battles. In truth, all efforts have come to naught, because there was neither method nor sense in the proceedings of the high mandarins. They tried to engraft the new branches of learning on the decayed trunk of the old, and have earned the reward they deserved. It was reserved for a new school of reformers to adopt a bold and comprehensive measure of national reform, aiming not at the addition of this or that new department, but actually laying the axe at the root of the tree.

CHAPTER III

THE CHINESE ENCYCLOPÆDISTS

OF the various tribes which comprise the Chinese nation the Cantonese are probably the most progressive as well as the most liberal-minded. This characteristic is doubtless due to Canton having been during so many generations one of the trade *entrepôts* in the East. The natives of the province of Kwang-tung were also the first to travel abroad and to emigrate to America and Australia. But whatever may be the causes of their enlightenment, the proximity of Hongkong and Macao is a factor of no little importance. Someone has said that man is an imitative creature, or mimic, so that frequent intercourse among different peoples will in time bring about a mutual understanding and a reciprocal interchange of ideas and habits. The Cantonese, at any rate, have enjoyed prolonged foreign intercourse, and have always been distinguished by their great attachment to their native land, by the ferocity of their character, and by the excellent *esprit de corps* maintained among themselves. It was natural that they should have been the leaders of reform. They long ago realised that the true path of progress lay in following the footsteps of the European nations. The returned emigrants doubtless have helped to instil confidence in the institutions and methods of Europeans, or at least to spread the report of the wealth and power of foreign States. Many scholars of Canton have therefore been led to study the literature produced by the missionaries and the various Government colleges. The changes adopted by Japan were closely followed, as we have seen, and more works than one have made their appearance on this subject. The trouble with China for many years was not that foreign ideas and new notions were not available. These were, in fact, all carefully dished in Chinese, and tastefully laid out; but either none would be tempted to approach the feast, or those who tasted of the foreign viands suffered from painful indigestion. Under these circumstances foreign learning languished for many years, while amateur physicians, engineers, and lawyers started to practise upon the ignorant and credulous public with their ill-assimilated knowledge, acquired from foreigners. However, the number of those who seriously studied the problems of the West steadily increased, and by slow degrees the stubborn resistance of the *literati* was overcome.

The historical works of Kang Yu Wei are of the highest importance in developing a new notion of the teaching of the ancient Classics. Through a series of brilliant commentaries Kang endeavours to show that there is no authority in the Sacred Books to justify the conservatism and retrograde policy either of the mandarins or of the Government. Kang had received a thorough preparation for his work, and he has, besides, the advantage of belonging to a family of rank and position. The conservative scholars resented his interpretation of the Classics and ironically gave him the sobriquet of "The Modern Sage."

His treatise on the spurious texts in the Classics tends to rest Confucianism on the secure basis of ethics, by showing the true spirit of the great national sage in his attitude towards eunuchs, slavery, worship of idols, and autocratic despotism. Confucius and Mencius are shown to be well in advance of the times, and the current traditions of the *literati* are exposed as the corrupt interpolations of after ages. The conservatives are shown to have taken shelter under the corrupt doctrines surreptitiously introduced in order to nullify the maxims of the wise, and to oppress the multitude with heartless tyranny. This work passed through eight editions, has been criticised by all parties, and the author has been singled out by censors for condign condemnation by the Throne.

Kang Yu Wei also produced another treatise on *Confucius as a Reformer*, tracing in clear and bold outlines the socialistic ideas of Confucius, which were fused with a due appreciation of the monarchical institution of the Chinese. But the great fact which Kang emphasises is the attitude of the Sage towards social and political changes. In a comprehensive manner the author points out that the whole efforts of Confucius were devoted to the removal from his times of the relics of barbaric ages. Although Confucius wished to secure for the country a revival of the laws and customs of the ancient Sage Kings,* he ever held fast, as a cardinal principle of politics, that times and circumstances necessitated social and political changes. Kang deduces from the Classics that Confucius really taught the general principles of political economy by his recognition of three stages of culture. The first is the age of barbarism, during which, as the essential condition of progress and civilisation, is required a sort of patriarchal despotism; implying strict laws to enforce the sanctity of human relationships, and to ensure the separation of the sexes for moral reasons. During such an era great emphasis is laid on etiquette, ceremonies, and social customs; and the ruling classes dominate the masses. The next degree of advancement is the stage of progress, during which the people, having been thoroughly educated, are allowed a voice in the government of the land. In short, we reach the stage of democracy, when the masses share the responsibility of government and when the sexes enjoy equal rights and advantages. The final act has not yet been played in the drama of the world. It is none else than the Millennium, when human knowledge

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* Yao and Shun, the former belonging to the twenty-fourth century and the latter to the twenty-third century B.C., according to Chinese chronology. Their history is largely mythical,

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but their character and policy were idealised by Confucius and Mencius, so that they now hold in the popular mind the place held by Moses amongst the Jews, as founders of the religious, social, and juridical system of China.—ED.

shall be complete, and man shall forget his enmity to man.

> "Till the war-drum throbbed no longer and the battle-flags were furled,
> In the Parliament of man and the Federation of the world,
> There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
> And the kindly Earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law."

These works were followed by other books on the chief doctrines of the philosopher Mencius, who stood to the cause of Confucianism much in the position that Paul did to early Christianity. The democratic tendency of all the sayings now extant of this sage is deftly handled, with appropriate applications for the use of the present time. Another treatise is specially devoted to the view of Confucius on the problems of civilisation, suitable to nations in different stages of culture.

The indefatigable Kang Yu Wei was not satisfied merely with a restatement of the fundamental principles of political science as embodied in the Classics, but spared no pains to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the religions of his country. His examinations into the Buddhist religion, from its fountainhead in India down to its latest degenerate forms in China, exhibit a painstaking research, as the labour expended on it must have been enormous, if we consider merely the extent and variety of the literature. His researches on the religion of the Hindus naturally led him to inquire into the cardinal tenets of all the great world-religions. His meditations on these were published as a complement to his essay on the Hindu Religions.

A philosophic work, entitled *The Study of Fundamental Principles*, introduces the readers to a new realm of thought, wherein the benighted *literatus* of ancient Cathay may read, in all the luminosity of his Memphian hieroglyphics, the laws of nature and of man. The author leads us through the whole arcana of modern thought, from the eternal verities of mathematical certitude to the infinite problems of psychology. Now he descants on the data of universal ethics, and now he soars aloft to the far-reaching consequences of cosmic evolution.

But the *magnum opus* of Kang Yu Wei consists in those masterly and powerful essays on the great epochs of universal history. A monumental treatise, *On the Rise and Fall of the Nations of the World*, gives a succinct account of the great political cataclysms which have swept away one dynasty in order to raise up another on the *débris* of the old. This work deals also with the colonisation of America and Africa by European nations. *The History of the Glory and Downfall of Turkey* was probably written with a special object in view, but whatever may have been the motives of the author, the wonderful story of the rise of the Ottoman Power, and a sober appreciation of the causes of its decay, must afford abundant materials for the profoundest thought of the scholars and officials of the Chinese Empire. *A History of the Constitutional Changes in England* exhibits an oppressed democracy slowly asserting its rights, until, by a happy readjustment, the wonderful British Constitution is the result. The realisation of the hopes and prophecies of the sages of China is nowhere seen to better advantage than in the struggles of the British people against the tyranny and oppression of rulers who claimed "a divine right" to rule. The sages indeed teach that "kings are by God appointed," but they wisely qualify this opinion by laying down, as an indispensable proof of divine approbation, that the people must be happy and prosperous, and that virtue and progress must characterise the acts of kings. Without these indications, the populace, whose will is the inspiration of Heaven, may justly rise against a wicked ruler, and punish him for neglect of duty towards Heaven and towards his people. In fact, the regicides of the great English Commonwealth could find no better vindication of their terrible act towards their king than in the teaching of the philosopher Mencius. One may well imagine with what keen interest a learned Chinese scholar might ponder over the actual realisation of the tentative principles advanced in China so many centuries before. The value of Kang Yu Wei's treatise is in its exposition of the compatibility of a free democracy with a pure government, under a monarch with constitutional powers, at once guarded from abuse by limitations, and supported for the beneficent exercise of authority by the will of a free people.

The History of Continental Europe, which Kang writes for the edification of the learned men of China (who know nothing of the world, and who will not read the uncouth translations of foreign works), consists of (1) a history of Germany, with special reference to the unification of the federal States; (2) the evolution of the government of France from the effete monarchy through the Reign of Terror down to the modern Republic; and (3) an appreciation of Peter the Great of Russia. Yang Yu Wei appears to have been deeply impressed with the character of this mighty Muscovite. The dreams of universal empire, said to have affected Peter, seem to the Chinese historian something sublimely grand. The persevering man, with his truly herculean efforts to lift up his country from barbarism, is indelibly engraven on the mind of his Chinese biographer, who, in one of his memorials to the Emperor Kuang Hsu, commends the example of Peter the Great for His Majesty's guidance.

Two great works are devoted to Japan. One deals with a sketch of Japanese literature, chiefly with the new additions by the younger scholars, and the numberless translations of all the great works of the world. It is chiefly through the translated works of the Japanese that Kang early gained an insight into the requirements of modern civilisation. The other treatise deals with Japanese reforms and refers to the patriotism of the Japanese nation. In this work, written some ten years prior to the war of 1894, it was clearly foreseen that the success of the Japanese in the acquisition of European culture would ultimately cost China the loss of Liaotung and Formosa, should China and Japan ever come to blows. The prophecy was fulfilled, and this accurate prediction, as we shall see later, converted the old Imperial tutor, Weng Tung Ho, from an opponent into an ardent admirer of the great reformer.

We need not refer to the political papers and other numerous essays written by Kang Yu Wei, but we may state that he also compiled *An Examination into the Customs and Social Usages of the Nations*, in his eager thirst for knowledge.

It is inevitable that errors should have crept into these works, dealing as they do with the history of the world, nor is it surprising that the author's opinions are sometimes crude, and often scarcely justified by the facts. These historical works are not to be compared with the labours of a Gibbon or a Taine, for naturally the compiler, not being acquainted with any European language, has not been able to examine the original sources of information. But as far as the Chinese of to-day are concerned, the historical works of Kang Yu Wei mark the commencement of a new epoch in their intellectual history.

The Reform Movement

Kang Yu Wei had by these monumental works clearly prepared the way for the political reforms which it was the labour of his lifetime to initiate. He became the leader of a new school, which we may compare with the *Parti des Philosophes*, headed by Voltaire and kept agoing by the energetic D'Alembert, in the critical years of French history prior to the Great Revolution. Kang Yu Wei soon collected a numerous following of ardent and enthusiastic students, and was the organiser of a gigantic campaign to rouse the *literati* with a shower of encyclopædic articles on all conceivable subjects of human knowledge. With monetary assistance from the Viceroy Chang Chi Tung, and with the promise of quarters in Pekin by Weng Tung Ho, Kang Yu Wei proceeded thither after the peace of Shimonoseki, accompanied by his disciple, Liang Chi Ch'ao, an exceptionally able Master of Arts,* who had already made a reputation as a powerful writer. They tried to start the first newspaper after the model of *The International Journal*, a popular magazine devoted to Christian interests, and formed the first debating society under the name of *Chiang Hsio Hui*, or "Association for the Study of

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* A graduate of the second degree (*kü-jin*).—Ed.

National Power." Numbers of scholars joined the society. But the Censors * would not give peace to the reformers, and so Kang Yu Wei was obliged to abandon his idea of starting a newspaper in Pekin. The pair removed to Shanghai, and were warmly received by all the literary men. The Viceroy Chang Chi Tung promised his hearty co-operation, while the Viceroy Liu Kun Yi offered to commend the new publications to the notice of his subordinates and to the scholars of his viceroyalty. Hwang Tsun Hsien, the ex-Consul-General at Singapore, was then Judge of Hunan, and was most enthusiastic in urging upon Liang Chi Ch'ao the importance of their joint undertaking. *The News of the Times* was brought to light in Shanghai under very encouraging conditions. It came out every ten days in the shape of a pamphlet, and each number contained translations from one or more of the following languages—English, Japanese, French, and Russian. In addition there were leaders dealing with the political situation, and instalments of some standard work translated from a foreign tongue. In the first few numbers there appeared instalments of a biography of General George Washington and a digest of the history and laws of British railways. This publication, known as the *Shi Wa Pao*, was therefore conceived in the same spirit that, more than a century ago, inspired the great Diderot, as Carlyle calls him, to join D'Alembert in editing the immortal *Encyclopédie*, that storehouse of freethought and revolutionary ideas, which heralded the most momentous changes in the social and political history of Europe.

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* The Board of Censors is a board of supervision and review, under whose criticism practically all that is transacted in the Empire passes. The Censors have curious duties and privileges, and are occasionally very outspoken in their criticisms and rebukes. They have been known to remonstrate with the Emperor himself, when they thought his public policy or his private conduct prejudicial to the interests of the realm.—Ed.

Kang Yu Wei and his colleagues may thus be called the Chinese Encyclopædists, although the encyclopædia, which they had sketched in outline, was never completed. In Shanghai and in Macao the followers of Kang issued their papers and books, which overflowed into every school and college, and which carried the whole body of *literati* towards the desired goal. For the first time the *literati* opened their eyes, and saw through those remarkable tracts the wonders of a new world. An enlightened democracy was called to life, only to behold its possessions despoiled and its limbs fettered! The attempt by this nascent democracy to ensure the future safety of its possessions, and to recover the free use of its limbs, brings us at once to the great political agitation for the reform of the Chinese administration. The influence of the Encyclopædists has been very great indeed; so great is it that even reactionary high officials like Li Hung Chang, and weathercock mandarins like Chang Chi Tung, are secret admirers of the agitators and their inimitable writings. A national cause has been called into being, a national want felt, and a national movement has been started to carry out the injunction of the sages of China—to wit, "the renovation of the people and the attainment of the highest good."

For the first time in Chinese history the graduates bestirred themselves on behalf of the country. When the Japanese threatened Pekin and the Manchus were clamouring for peace, over one thousand graduates of the M.A. degree protested against a peace which must be acquired at such a tremendous sacrifice. This was quite an unprecedented outburst of feeling, and the Manchus saw that something had to be done to abate such public indignation, for, be it remembered, the graduates are really the representatives of the influential commoners of the whole Empire. A scapegoat was found in Sun Yu Wen, a member of the Grand Council,* who was accordingly degraded. The punishment of such a high official had not taken place for three hundred years.

The example and influence of Kang Yu Wei and his followers soon spread into Hunan, Hupeh, Kwangsi, Kiang Su, and other provinces. Literary societies cropped up in most provincial cities, and syndicates were formed for publishing works on science, history, and other new branches of study. The most remarkable instance of the beneficial influence of the Encyclopædists is that of Hunan, which was before the most bigoted and anti-foreign of all the provinces in China. In less than a year the scholars took the infection of the new learning, and Hunan became the most progressive portion of the Empire. To-day it is still the hot-bed of the reform propaganda; and the scholars there are now among the most progressive and enlightened. Shanghai became the headquarters of this movement, and medical and other societies soon flourished. The associations for the study of pedagogy, for the education of women, and for spreading literature against foot-binding, indicate the progressive tendency of this revival of learning. The whole Empire was shaken, and at last the Emperor Kuang Hsu felt the mysterious vibrations of this upheaval, and before long was carried into the very midst of the intellectual maelstrom.

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* Or, the Imperial Privy Council.—ED.

CHAPTER IV

JEALOUSY BETWEEN CHINESE AND MANCHUS

THE extensive anti-foreign propagandism in North China is not the sudden momentary outbreak of a band of fanatics, but the outcome of a deliberate scheme elaborated by the reactionary Manchus for the expulsion of foreigners and the vindication of the prowess of the Tsing dynasty.* But it is by no means an easy task to appreciate all the subsidiary forces which have contributed to make the plan of the Manchus so formidable. The difficulty of the student arises partly from want of exact data and partly from the intricacy and complexity of the problem to be solved. The truth must be frankly admitted that there has always been lurking, somewhere or other, an anti-foreign feeling ever since the Europeans have opposed the mandarins by force of arms. The existence of this hatred of the foreigner is proved by the frequent assaults on the persons of missionaries or their converts. It is impossible to understand this question merely from the European point of view. To arrive at a just estimate of the difficulties which await solution it is essential that the conditions which have led to the chaos in the country should be viewed from within as well as from without.

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* The Tsing, or Tartar-Manchu dynasty—that now in power—dates from 1644. Kuang Hsu, the present Emperor, is the ninth in the succession.—ED.

Very many people have failed to recognise that the Chinese Empire embraces two really antagonistic elements, the Chinese and the Manchus; in other words, the China represented by the millions of Chinese proper, the people without whom China, even with its resources, would scarcely be worth scrambling for, and the China represented by the Manchus and their parasites, the mandarins, the so-called representatives of the millions — the people who have hitherto been responsible for all the foreign troubles of China. The Chinese, as a whole, are not anti-foreign, nor are they strongly opposed to foreigners. The fact that during the last three hundred years they have emigrated to all parts of Asia, and have carried on business with other nations, is conclusive evidence of their appreciation of foreign intercourse. In the Malay islands and states, especially in the Straits Settlements, we have a good example of what the Chinese really are. They are not enthusiastic in their reception of new ideas; but when shown how their ways may be improved they do not hesitate to change their views. So out of China the Chinese have slowly but surely advanced. Let anyone who has a doubt on this matter go to Singapore and make a personal investigation. The Chinese there have no objection to anything foreign, are friendly to all races, and endeavour in every possible way to avail themselves of the achievements of western science. But in China the Chinese are not free. The Manchus have the upper hand in the village as well as in the capital. Directly or indirectly, their wishes are made known to the people. The Manchus have never forgiven the European nations for the wars which culminated in the burning of the Summer Palace at Pekin by the British soldiers in 1860. Their one hope is to keep the Chinese in the same old rut as themselves, and to make the unhappy millions the buffer between the invading foreigners and themselves. At all costs, the

Chinese must be urged to hate foreigners and to resist the encroachments of western civilisation. The Manchus have not been slow to take advantage of the weaknesses of the Chinese, and to turn these to their profit. The Chinese are world-famed for their filial piety and for their gross superstitions. To these the Manchus have not appealed in vain. The Chinese who are subservient to the powers that be do not hesitate to act in any way which will please the Manchus. The mandarins, therefore, are at the bottom of the anti-foreign and anti-progressive movements in China.

We have already traced the long and toilsome course through which new ideas gradually reached the heart and conscience of the literary men of China. When they awakened they found the indefatigable Kang Yu Wei already in the van of progress. As far back as 1888 Kang had sent up a memorial respecting the slow absorption of Eastern Asia by Russia; but this paper, like many of his subsequent memorials, was scornfully thrown back in his face by the superior mandarins. In 1895, after the Chinese had suffered successive defeats, Kang repaired to Pekin, hoping to turn the national misfortunes to advantage by arousing the injured national spirit; and he thought the reverses might be turned into blessings, if they would only make the high officials open their eyes, and convince the Government that reforms were indispensable in order to its continued stability. Kang Yu Wei therefore prepared an elaborate memorandum on the political situation; but again the high mandarins above him would not present it to the throne. However, the Imperial tutor, Weng Tung Ho, was struck with the remarkable prediction of Kang regarding Japan,* and in collusion with the learned reformer, he drafted twelve edicts relating to mining, railways, and foreign languages. But the Empress-Dowager and her henchmen, Prince Ching and the Manchu members of the Tsungli Yamen, suppressed the edicts and got Weng's assistants dismissed from the service. Kang Yu Wei left Pekin to travel again in search of knowledge. But he was destined soon to return, drawn thither by the aggressive attitude of Germany in the Shantung province. Kang Yu Wei was then a second-class assistant at the Board of Works. This time he drew up his famous "Appeal to the Emperor on behalf of the Nation and the

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* *Vide ante*, p. 41.

Empire." In this patriotic memorial Kang requested the Emperor not to trust the assertions of high officials assuring him of the safety or power of the country. He pathetically described the decay both of the nation and the Imperial power. After recommending to the Emperor's notice the success of reforms in Japan, and the unselfish efforts of Peter the Great, Kang Yu Wei emphasised the suspense in the national mind in view of the insecurity of life and property, consequent on the high-handed proceedings of foreign nations. He urged the importance of convening a council of the best men of the Empire to advise on the necessary steps to be taken in reorganising the Government, and he bemoaned the curtailment of the power of the provincial authorities by wire-pulling at the metropolis. He pointed out that the adoption of reforms would again make China strong, that the employment of the best men in the land, even without reforms, would allow the Empire to totter along, and that the strengthening of the provinces might avert total ruin.

Kang wound up his magnificent memorial with this bold and eloquent appeal :—" If Your Majesty will not decide, or will prefer to remain in the old grooves of the Conservatives, then your territories will be swallowed up, your limbs will be bound, your viscera will be cut out, and Your Majesty will scarcely manage to retain your throne or to rule over more than a fragment of your ancient Empire!" As an excuse for this audacious note, the author says that he was prompted perhaps by selfishness as much as by patriotism, as in his opinion the Emperor stood to the State as the great beam of the roof to a house. Hence he concluded his paper by saying that, "When the great beam breaks, the roof will come down, and all below will be involved in ruin."

Naturally the officials refused to present this note to the throne, but the text was soon published. The Pekin mandarins were thrown into a state of fear and consternation. Then an account of the memorial reached the Emperor himself, and an under-secretary of State, Ko, petitioned His Majesty to give an audience to Kang Yu Wei. But Prince Kung strongly objected, on the principle that Kang's rank was not such as would entitle him to such an honour. The thing fell through, and Kang again went forth to preach his doctrines, to assist in the publication of his encyclopædia, and to gather in more disciples to the cause of reform.

Then, in the spring of 1898, Weng Tung Ho fell out with Prince Ching, and was dismissed from Court. Before he departed he strongly recommended that Kang Yu Wei be sent for by the Emperor, stating that Kang was "a hundred times abler" than himself. The Emperor agreed in this opinion. Once more the Nestor of Reform, Kang Yu Wei, hastened to the capital; when, after the death of Prince Kung, Hsü Chi Ching recommended the Emperor to command Kang to appear in Court. At the same time, Chan Pao Chen, Governor of Hunan, memorialised on behalf of Liang Chi Ch'ao. Chang Yin Huan,* ex-Minister to the United States and member of the Tsungli Yamen, co-operated to secure the Imperial favour on behalf of the reformers. To obviate all difficulties, Kang was made a Secretary of the Tsungli Yamen, and after audience, Liang Chi Ch'ao was also decorated with honours. The Tsungli Yamen was ordered to examine and report on the proposals of Kang Yu Wei, but they practically refused to do so, until they were threatened with punishment. In consequence of their attitude, Kuang Hsu commanded all works written by Kang to be brought before him, and ordered the Tsungli Yamen to forward in future all Kang's memorials for his perusal. Thenceforward the Emperor launched in real earnest upon the glorious work of transforming the immemorial usages of the fossil kingdom.

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* *Vide infra*, p. 263.

Kang Yu Wei then prepared another memorial embodying all his views as to reform. These may be summarised by saying that Kang contemplated the creation of twelve special departments to look after the newly constituted government. The finances were to be overhauled thoroughly. The salaries of the officials were to be increased, and the money required was to be raised by better means of collecting the revenue, by imposition of indirect taxes, by granting licences for mining, railways, and other undertakings, and by the abolition of all useless sinecures. The laws were to be revised, and all the latest appurtenances of a civilised state were to be gradually added to the acquirements of the Chinese Empire. An elaborate scheme of national education aimed at thorough reform of the examinations, and at the introduction of science and foreign languages. A congress of the scholars and politicians was recommended as a good means of ascertaining the views of the best men of the Empire. Commerce was to be specially looked after, and international relations were to be specially studied. Lastly the army and navy were to be thoroughly reorganised.

Many friends of the reformer have charged Kang Yu Wei with rashness in precipitating the conflict between Kuang Hsu and the Manchus. There was indeed no rashness on the part of Kang Yu Wei, because at an audience the Emperor pointed out to him the powerful opposition to reform among the older mandarins, and requested his advice. Kang advised moderation and patience, and counselled the Emperor not to dismiss any, but rather to treat them leniently, suggesting that the work of reform might be apportioned to their subordinates, who would be held responsible. But the conflict was inevitable, though one could see that Kang's policy of moderation was doomed to failure, by creating jealousy between the conservative chiefs, who were given nothing to do, and their subordinates, who were in the Emperor's favour. In fact, reforms could only succeed if the reformers had sufficient power to compel obedience.

In March or April, 1898, Liang Chi Ch'ao petitioned against the monstrous system of writing essays according to a mechanical scheme of dividing the subject into eight heads. Hence the name *Pa Ku* for this style of writing. The sentences in certain portions must be antithetical, or the terminal particles must be identical, or some other equally absurd condition must be observed. The writing of these essays is a most difficult acquirement, and it is safe to say that nothing has done more to cramp the national mind. Liang was enthusiastically joined by many graduates, but there were many thousands of men who earned their living as teachers of this system. Fearing they would lose their means of livelihood, they quietly joined the Conservatives.

The success of the Encyclopædists in Hunan frightened the Manchus. The conservative officials instigated a mob against the College, and the printing-house was nearly set on fire. Yet, in this province, the governor and the judge were patrons of the new movement.

During two or three months, while the Emperor was busily studying the works recommended to him by Kang, he worked with the assistance of four of Kang's disciples, Lin Hsü, T'an Tze T'ung, Liao Kwan-ti, and Yung-I. Many petitions arrived imploring the Emperor to suppress the reformers, who now numbered many thousands. But the Emperor paid no heed to the remonstrances of the Conservatives.

On the 11th June, 1898, an Imperial decree appeared, approving of reforms in general terms. On June 23 another decree was issued abolishing the writing of mechanical essays, euphemistically called "Brilliant" (*Wen Chang*), from the civil examinations. This was done in spite of the emphatic protest of the Board of Rites, whose president indulged in a violent personal attack on Kang Yu Wei. The Emperor remained neutral.

As the Tsungli Yamen had not replied to the Imperial rescript, commanding them to report on Kang's works and suggestions, the Emperor ordered the Grand Council on the 5th July to confer with the Tsungli Yamen on the same subjects. Within a week the two Boards recommended a rejection of all the schemes. The Emperor was furious. He sent back the same questions to them, and cautioned them that he expected them to study the matter. The Emperor knew that he was being watched, consequently he was anxious to be supported by the Ministers. After further deliberation, the Grand Council and the Tsungli Yamen selected the unimportant and minor details of Kang's scheme for the approval of the Emperor.

Meanwhile the wildest rumours were current in Pekin. Kang, it was alleged, was advising the Emperor to abolish the Six Boards![*] The Emperor was reported to be seriously ill, though he was seen every day by one of Kang Yu Wei's men, and transacted the various duties of his high office.

The Imperial decrees were generally well received in the South. By means of lectures and publications people understood very clearly the grand objectives for the attainment of which the Emperor and his devoted advisers were labouring.

The Imperial edict sanctioning the use of temples as schools was misrepresented by the Conservatives. The powerful priests of Pekin were alarmed. The story was spread that the Emperor was secretly receiving lessons in Christianity, and that the reformers were on the point of forcing this exotic superstition on the nation. Riots arose. The priests of Pekin worked with the eunuchs to gain the favour and the support of the Empress-Dowager.

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[*] The Six Boards, through which business passes to the Grand Council, are as follows:—1. The Board of Administration, or Civil Office. 2. The Board of Revenue. 3. The Board of Rites, or Ceremonies. 4. The Board of War. 5. The Board of Punishments. 6. The Board of Works. The names of these Boards are sufficiently descriptive of their respective duties.—ED.

In August many useless departments and obsolete offices were abolished, on the suggestion of a magistrate who was a thorough iconoclast. Then came another edict, permitting everyone to petition or address a memorial directly to the Emperor. The evils of allowing memorials to wade through the different hands of corrupt mandarins had been productive of incalculable mischief and injustice.

In the same month one minor official recommended the Emperor to take a trip round the world. The Board of Rites refused to present this memorial, against the express injunction of the recent edict. The Emperor discovered this, and in a fit of passion dismissed six subordinates of the Board of Rites, and gave Kang a high promotion. Then it was that the Conservatives rallied under the guidance of Yung-lu and Kang-Yi.* It must be pointed out that the Chinese and Manchus had by this time almost broken out into open hostility. In Pekin Kang-Yi openly lectured to the Manchus that the aggressive attitude of the Chinese was intolerable. He addressed his own nationals once in this style: "Better far it will be for us to divide our possessions among our friends, the foreigners, than to permit our slaves to rob us of our heritage!"

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* *Vide* chaps. x. and xi.

There were working against each other two forces, one very powerful, the other still very weak. The revolutionary party was curiously enough headed by the Emperor, but without a doubt, Kang Yu Wei and his friends were thoroughgoing iconoclasts, who aimed at a complete change of the Government. This was the first time in the whole history of China that an organisation was set on foot, not for the purpose of upsetting the dynasty, but for the enfranchisement of the people. Hitherto all revolutionists had aimed solely at capturing the ruler, subverting the reigning house, and getting possession of the tax-gathering machinery. The reform movement was a national awakening, and the reformers clamoured for liberty, freedom of thought, exercise of the inherent rights of man, and justice. The Emperor then created a reform bureau, consisting of the four disciples of Kang already mentioned, with himself as president. Kang Yu Wei refused appointment on the

Grand Council in order to appease the fear and jealousy of the high officials.

After the severe measures taken against the Board of Rites, petitions began to pour in, and also all kinds of memorials from the *literati* and officials. Among these, one from Chang, a secretary of the Board of Punishment, urged the enfranchisement of the people, so that Chinese might be treated on equal terms with Manchus, in order that the two races might be made one. He also urged abolition of the present examinations, the cancelling of the *kowtow*,* and the formation of a Legislature. One secretary of the Board of Works wanted more foreigners in the public service, and would like to see the *kowtow* ceremony dispensed with.

The approach of the storm was known to the Emperor. But he patriotically promised to sacrifice his life for his country. He was not to be frightened. By a secret edict he exhorted his followers to be faithful to him despite the trials which were soon to be theirs. His appeals were truly pathetic.

On September 13th His Majesty finally

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* *Kowtow.* A ceremony of prostration, in which, as a sign of respect and submission, a man kneels before a superior of high rank and strikes his head upon the ground.—ED.

decided to call a congress of all the learned and able men available in Pekin to meet at the Mao-Chin Palace in order to consider the draft of a new constitution which had been prepared by the Reform Bureau. T'an Tze T'ung was therefore requested to hunt up all the precedents for the use of the Palace for similar purposes.

But the next day the reformers were at their wits' end when they perceived the first sign of the danger which was soon to destroy their cause and to threaten them all with destruction —a secret Imperial edict commanded the reformer to secure means for the protection of the throne.

Then arrangements were made to call Yuan Shi-kai* to Pekin as the only friend whom the Emperor could fall back upon. The secret edict was shown to Yuan. But in spite of his travels abroad and of his experience in Corea, Yuan Shi-kai was not the man to play the difficult rôle of protecting the Emperor against the Manchus. He turned traitor, and the Emperor discovered he had depended for his safety upon a broken reed.

On the arrival of Yung-lu, fully described later,† the reform government of Kuang Hsu collapsed utterly on the 21st September, 1898. Thus ended the most remarkable efforts of a truly good monarch on behalf of the millions entrusted to his paternal care.

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* *Vide infra*, p. 125.

† *Vide* chap. xi.

His immediate advisers, five in number, were butchered without trial; and poor Kang Kwang Jin was beheaded simply because he was the brother of the famous reformer. All those who had sympathised with the reforms were banished or imprisoned. Among these was Chang Yin Huan, since beheaded; Li Tuan Fen, Liang Chi Ch'ao's brother-in-law; and many others. Fortunately for Kang Yu Wei and Liang Chi Ch'ao they managed to escape the clutches of their enemies. The wonderful success of the movement, until it was checked by brute force, considerably alarmed both the Manchus and conservative Chinese. They could hardly fail to discover that it was chiefly the foreign literature which had turned the heads of the reformers. Did they not affect the humanitarianism ot Rousseau, and did they not go out of the annals of the "Central Kingdom" to find an example for the Emperor to follow, in this case of Peter the Great? The sages of China found comparatively little space in their publications, but the character and intellectual force of foreign heroes loomed large through the pages of the new literature.

Under the circumstances the Conservatives, and especially the Manchus, were compelled to act in self-defence, and they recognised that, as long as Kuang Hsu lived, there was no hope of putting an end to the Encyclopædists. They did their work with great thoroughness in burning books, destroying printing presses, and imprisoning authors, and then they turned their attention to the great figure-head who sanctioned all these strange innovations. The reform movement is at present suppressed, but not killed. The injustice of the Manchus is rankling in the breast of every thoughtful man, and the best sons of China are preparing to die once more for the faith of their fathers. The reformers must triumph ultimately, unless the foreigners are driven away from China by the forces of Prince Tuan; or unless the Allies will again consent to help the Manchus in maintaining their despotism over the children of Han.*

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* The Chinese are fond of calling themselves the sons or the men of Han, in allusion to the famous dynasty of that name founded by Liu Pang, who overthrew the preceding dynasty about 206 B.C., and reigned under the title of Kao-tzu. The reign of the Hans marks an important epoch in the national development of China.—ED.

No, the conscience and imagination of the civilised world cannot, and will not, tolerate inhuman wretches like Tuan, Yung-lu, and Kang-Yi,* as the dispensers of justice. It will be the obvious duty of the Allies to procure for the country such an administration as will save it from further anti-foreign troubles. This can be achieved only by severity towards culprits and by magnanimity to the millions who are also the victims of the Manchu desperadoes. The Allies will find in the reformers of China the true friends of foreigners, and will do well to take the advice of reform leaders in the permanent settlement of the interior. Sir Robert Hart will doubtless be able to give all the necessary information. The prospects of the reform movement have never been brighter, and let us hope that out of the present troubles and out of the fearful destruction of life permanent good and lasting peace may arise, to cement once more the union of the East and West!

* Kang-Yi is now dead.—ED.

PART II

THE EMPRESS-DOWAGER
HER ADVISERS, TOOLS, AND VICTIMS

CHAPTER V

EARLY HISTORY OF YEHONALA

A NEW era in the history of Asia commences with the disastrous conflicts between the Allies and the Boxers, with their auxiliaries, the Imperial troops under the reactionary generals. The growing discontent of the people and the increasing intercourse with foreign nations have been briefly summarised. The ruler of a country is usually supposed to be personally responsible for all the acts of Government. At any rate, it is the custom of many historians to divide the epochs of a nation's history by the reigns of the rulers. However, no account of the insane crusade of the Manchus can be written without frequent reference to the Empress-Dowager of China. To describe the acts of the Empress-Dowager practically means to write the history of China during the last forty years. Although history does not consist merely of Court chronicles and of the personal doings of kings and royal personages, yet there is an undoubted advantage in the biographical method of treating history. There is less danger of introducing abstract principles, while the period of each ruler's reign serves as a convenient peg on which to hang the diverse units which make up the life of a nation. Moreover, in the comparatively unknown episodes of contemporary Chinese history, much advantage is derived from grouping the incidents of the present crisis around the persons of the principal actors in the tragedy of North China.

It is not convenient to separate the history of the Emperor Kuang Hsu from the present narrative. The unfortunate Emperor has never really been an independent ruler, for the reign of Kuang Hsu has been in truth the reign of the Empress-Dowager.

Yehonala is the Manchu family name or surname of the imperious old woman who is *de facto* sovereign of the Chinese Empire. Born of Manchu parents who were resident in Pekin, she grew up to be a beautiful maiden, and, according to the practice of the Manchus, was in due course selected for the harem by the Imperial procurators, who acted as procurers for the seraglio of the Forbidden City.* The rules of the Tsing dynasty are that the daughters of all metropolitan Manchus between the ages of fifteen and eighteen are liable to be chosen for the Imperial harem, but in the provinces the choice of the procurators is confined to the children of Manchu officials above the fifth rank. There is a current tradition that the Chinese stipulated with their barbarian conquerors that Chinese girls were on no account to be taken from their parents to swell the ranks of the palace concubines. The practice of selecting the most acceptable girls for the use of the royal palace obtains in most oriental countries. The custom was certainly known among the Persians and Jews. Yehonala was the fortunate or, as some say, unfortunate damsel whom the Procurator thought would best please his Imperial master. So at the tender age of sixteen years, she left the *yamen*† of her father, a petty metropolitan official, to enter the Hall of the "Sacred Precincts," and to be ushered into a new world, brimful of hope and possibilities. Her detractors have circulated the legend that she was a slave-girl at Canton, and was presented to the Emperor by her Chinese master, who had adopted her as a daughter. But the whole story is a pure myth; although the belief in her connection with the South may well have arisen through some confusion on the part of the originator of the fiction, for the Empress Tzu Ann was, in her youth, living in the South, where her father was a prefectural officer of some kind in the province of Kwangsi. Though Yehonala was almost, if not quite, illiterate when she entered the palace, she immediately realised the importance of her new situation and assiduously applied herself to the study of the Chinese language. She seems to have found favour with her lord, and before long she was distinguished as the great favourite of the weak and unfortunate Emperor Hsien-Feng. The latter succeeded his father when he was just nineteen years of age, and, being worn out by vices and dissipation, he magnified his troubles, put his faith in the superstitions of the common people, and hated "the red-haired barbarians." He surrounded his person with conservative courtiers, and abandoned himself to the enjoyments of his palace. The beautiful Yehonala, like the

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* The innermost part of the city of Pekin is so called because no one is admitted to its precincts save those who have some official standing in the Court. It is wholly reserved for the Imperial Household.—Ed.

† A *yamen* is a public office.—Ed.

Jewess Hagar, was the handmaid who was to bear a son for her master. The wife of Hsien-Feng, the Empress Tzu Ann, appears to have been like Sarah, who, in her anxiety to make up for her own sterility, encouraged her husband to show his favour to her maid. Perhaps Hsien-Feng wanted no encouragement, but the Empress herself took a great interest in the young concubine as the prospective mother of her husband's son and heir. The dissolute Emperor added title after title to the name of his favourite Yehonala. Entering the harem as a concubine of the fifth rank, she was rapidly promoted after the birth of her son, Tung-Chi, and was ultimately raised by the Emperor to the dignity of "Imperial Consort" (*Hwang Kwei Fei*). It must not be supposed, however, that Hsien-Feng and Yehonala had not their domestic troubles. The young female was obstinate, quick-tempered, and fierce, being jealous of the grand position of the Empress. Emboldened by the growing importance of her position, she dared to hold her opinion, even when it gave offence to her lord. Indeed, before the birth of her son, Hsien-Feng had "a scene" with her; and again, when she had borne him his only son, he nearly dismissed her from the seraglio for bad temper and insolence. The Empress interceded on her behalf; for, unlike the Jewess Hagar, the young concubine did not openly despise her Imperial mistress. Yehonala displayed even in her youth the great qualities of her character, as well as the weakness of her temperament. Domestic quarrels never end once they start. The melancholic and sickly Hsien-Feng was no match for the vivacious, fiery, and high-spirited Manchu girl of eighteen. He became suspicious of her conduct, while she on her part showed her contempt for his weakness. She played her part extremely well. In love affairs, just as in the more prosaic walks of life, what is easily got is never highly prized. Yehonala found this out instinctively, and, concubine though she was, she would not make herself "cheap." It was this consciousness of her own dignity—apart from her charms—which drew the Emperor so much to her. With the Empress she was as docile and tame as a lamb. So for many years they were able to live on terms of friendship, a fact in itself remarkable, and not the least wonderful in the career of any woman. As for the Emperor, though his domestic circle was not altogether undisturbed and his health was rapidly failing, yet these personal afflictions were bearable. While he was caressing the petulant Yehonala, the Taiping rebels were capturing city after city, and the "red-haired devils" were marching on his capital. At length the cannonade of the Anglo-French expedition came within ear-shot of the sumptuous palace.

There was commotion that day within the palace. The eunuchs rushed here and there. There was an indescribable din. The shrill voices of women, the screams of children, and the vile oaths of the eunuchs combined to make a chorus of discord not unworthy of pandemonium. Outside, carts were ready, as well as the pack camels and the escort of cavalry. Why all this stir and hubbub? The Emperor was frightened. His womenfolk were scared. But they could not travel without their rouge-pots, mirrors, and countless odds and ends, wherewithal to decorate themselves for His Majesty's pleasure. Hence the packing and the boxes. At length the expedition was ready. The feeble Son of Heaven was supported by the Empress and the charming concubine Yehonala, and was thus conveyed into the covered Imperial cart. The young prince, the other females, and the eunuchs mounted their carts, the equipages took up their proper places, and at a signal the Imperial cavalcade started on the way to Jeho, the favourite hunting-ground of the Emperor. Thus went out of Pekin the ill-fated Hsien-Feng, his heir, and his women.

It was fortunate for the Emperor that he left in good time. No sooner had the Imperial procession departed than the artillery of "the foreign devils" was playing havoc on His Majesty's brave Manchu soldiers. San ko-lin sin, the Mongol general, was irretrievably defeated, and Pekin fell to the foreigners almost without a blow. To punish the Emperor for the treachery of his officials and for their barbarous treatment of British subjects, amongst whom were Parkes and Loch, the British general ordered the Summer Palace of the Emperor to be burnt. The magnificence and beauty of the palace did not prevent it from destruction, and after the contents had been looted and priceless articles had been ruthlessly destroyed, the buildings, which had cost many millions, were committed to the flames.

Pekin had been deserted by her Imperial master, and by his womankind. It therefore devolved upon Prince Kung, the Emperor's brother, to arrange terms of peace with the

Allies. The urbanity and tact displayed by him won the sympathy of the victorious foreigners, who, as if to atone for the vandalism committed, were excessively moderate in their demands. Two important concessions were wrung from the haughty Manchus, besides other privileges—the right of residence in Pekin for foreign ambassadors and the toleration of Christianity. At the time these were regarded as the most valuable achievements of the expedition, not so much in themselves as in the far-reaching consequences which might follow.

The treaty was duly ratified. Prince Kung had to travel to Jeho to get the Imperial signature. British, French, American, and Russian representatives arrived in due time; and Legation Street sprang into existence. But the Emperor returned not. He was in Jeho, surrounded by his women, his eunuchs, and his parasites. He had taken with him from Pekin the most subservient and conservative courtiers, who, from their intense hatred of foreigners, were able to assuage his grief as no others could. The loss of the Summer Palace was a cruel blow; but it did not affect him so much as the discovery that his favourite Yehonala was receiving the suspicious attentions of a relative and the Prince Su Suen. Already a hypochondriac and a melancholic, Hsien-Feng began to distrust Yehonala, and wrote out a secret codicil authorising the Empress to degrade his "Imperial Consort" whenever the latter should not behave herself. The Empress was warned of the wickedness of Yehonala, and was cautioned to watch her rival, who, on the strength of being mother to her son Tung-Chi, might try to usurp the authority of the Dragon Throne. Subsequent events have shown that Hsien-Feng's fears were fully justified.

Hsien-Feng sickened and died. But he had already entrusted the government of his realm to a Council of Eight of the most conservative among those who were his immediate companions. There was the Prince Su Suen, the relative and confidant of the Emperor, a nobleman of great influence in Pekin, but too ardent an admirer of Yehonala. His influence over Hsien-Feng was great, and though the Emperor suspected his intrigues with his concubine, he had not the resolution to denounce him. The death of Hsien-Feng cleared the path of Prince Kung. Without delay Prince Kung opened negotiations with the Empress Tzu Ann, and on one pretext or another the regents appointed by Hsien-Feng were executed or degraded. Prince Su Suen was charged with gross breach of etiquette in having his harem with him while superintending the last funeral rites due to the deceased Emperor. In reality, he was executed as a common malefactor, because the Empress discovered he had been in league with the young Imperial Consort, and had fallen in love with her, in short. It was supposed that he had designs of his own, and was contemplating a *coup d'état* by which authority was to be taken away from the Empress-Dowager. But he was forestalled, and the Council of Regency, nominated by the late Emperor, became defunct from want of members.

The Empress Tzu Ann returned to Pekin with the youthful heir of Hsien-Feng and his mother, Yehonala. By the *coup d'état*, effected through the activity of Prince Kung and Prince Suen, brothers of the late Emperor, the Council of Regency was abolished, and the dynastic title* assumed by Hsien-Feng's successor was altered to Tung-Chi. By the accession of her son as Emperor, Yehonala was promoted by the Dowager-Empress, in the name of Tung-Chi, to the dignity of a Dowager-Empress. A long string of honorific titles, commencing with the words *Tzu Hsi*, having been added to her name, she has henceforth been popularly known as the Dowager-Empress Tzu Hsi of the Western Palace, while the senior dowager was distinguished as the Empress of the Eastern Palace.

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* It is customary with the emperors, on their accession, to sink their personal names in significant dynastic titles. Tung-Chi means "Government in Union."—ED.

The Western Empress Tzu Hsi was a coregent with the Dowager-Empress Tzu Ann, but the government was really in the hands of the latter and of Prince Kung. Many European writers have fallen into the error of reckoning the date of the Western Empress's rise to power from the year of her son's accession. These forget that the Eastern Empress-Dowager was also a clear-headed and able woman. As she was the true wife of Hsien-Feng and the senior Empress-Dowager, her influence was paramount. All the facts known of Yehonala indicate that she was exceedingly subservient to her senior partner during many years, and always acted in deference to the Empress Tzu Ann's wishes, until she had made sure of her own position.

Then, as we shall see, she was ready for any emergency, and did not hesitate to repeat in almost every detail the crimes and intrigues of Catharine de Medici.

Prince Kung was assisted by the Ministers Kwei-Liang and Wan-Siang. Through their co-operation the Tsungli Yamen was formally opened in 1861. Prince Kung had the reputation of being a progressive and intelligent noble, and was well liked by the foreign representatives. With the exception of two slight rebuffs in 1865 and in 1874, he practically remained at the head of affairs from 1861 to 1884. After his dismissal he retired from public service and devoted his time to religious devotion, and especially to the rebuilding of Buddhist temples. He was the trusted adviser and friend of the Empress-Dowager Tzu Ann, and as long as the latter lived his position was secure. Hsien-Feng's principal widow was a woman with very strict principles, but though her character was adorned with many feminine virtues, she was flexible and vacillating. As time went on, the Western Empress gradually dominated over her; and when the first open rupture took place between the rival Empresses, it was also the last. Writers like Colonel Denby, ex-United States Minister at

Pekin, and others who admire the policy of the present Dowager-Empress, mistook the achievements of the late Empress-Dowager Tzu Ann for those of the living Yehonala, the Terrible Woman. The little progress that China made was carried out in the years between 1861 and 1881. After the disastrous wars of the previous reigns, and after the suppression of the Taiping and the Mohammedan insurrections,* the general return to prosperity was effected under the able and careful superintendence of the late Empress-Dowager, with the assistance of Prince Kung and patriots such as Tseng Kuo Fang, the accomplished scholar and successful soldier, and Tso Tsung Pang, the conqueror of Turkestan.† Li Hung Chang, who was destined to play such varied parts in this history, was rising steadily in power, supported as he was by Tseng Kuo Fang, who first recognised his merits during the Taiping campaigns. The Empress-Dowager Tzu Ann was a docile pupil in the hands of Prince Kung; and Tzu Hsi, the Western Empress-Dowager, did nothing to excite her suspicion of the designs which were being slowly matured for her overthrow.

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* The Mohammedan insurrection broke out in the north-west provinces in 1860. It was not finally suppressed until 1873. The Taiping Rebellion — better known to English readers, owing perhaps to the late General Gordon's connection with it—lasted from 1851 to 1865.—Ed.

† The conquest of Turkestan (Eastern) was achieved in 1876-7.—Ed.

The Western Empress-Dowager was as crafty as a fox, but she allowed her fancies to inflame her ambition until she beheld, through the vistas of futurity, the unexampled glory and splendour which were to be her own. From that moment she has consistently striven to be the guiding spirit of the Court and the real ruler of the great Empire. But she was too wise to jump into the arena of action while she was yet unprepared. She bided her time and strengthened her arms, so that during the greater part of her own son's reign she was content to play second fiddle to her rival, the senior Empress-Dowager. All the valuable institutions of modern China, excepting the very recent schools started by Li Hung Chang and the factories built by Chang Chi Tung, were the creations of this period. They may be said to be the works of the Empress Tzu Ann. The Tung Wen Kuan, or College of Universal Learning, in Pekin was an Imperial Institute, developed by Sir Robert Hart with the help of Dr. Martin, the well-known missionary. In Shanghai, Foochow, and Canton, naval arsenals, colleges, and dockyards were built at enormous expense, while military schools on the European model were established at Tientsin and elsewhere.

Yehonala at first found more pleasure in amusing herself in her palace than in fomenting intrigues in Court. As a junior Regent she found that she was seldom allowed a chance to have her own way, and being yet inexperienced in the art of diplomacy and not having felt the promptings of ambition, she was well satisfied with her lot in the beautiful Palace of the West. Had she been allowed her own way she might have brought greater ignominy on the House of Tsing by the open licentiousness of her palace, but she would probably have never risen as a terror in the political world of the Empire. Fate, however, had decreed it otherwise. The Empress-Dowager of the Eastern Palace was ever watchful to preserve the memory of her deceased lord from the odium which would be attached to it by the misconduct of the Imperial Household. Report has it that she acted almost with motherly solicitude as a guardian of the virtues of her beautiful and ambitious rival.

Human nature, however, does not develop to suit the requirements of moral philosophers. High moral maxims have their proper place, but Imperial dignity and much-coveted honours are no guarantee of virtue, much less of purity or chastity. Imagine, then, the position of a hot-blooded, sentimental, imaginative young woman of twenty-five summers leading a high and exciting life without limit to her hours or to her pleasures. Late hours and excessive feeding on the richest luxuries of the Imperial table do not conduce to coolness of the blood. But though it is dangerous to tempt Nature, yet we know she is obedient enough, if we understand how to command. If even in modern Europe high life does not improve morals, then what must we expect in the murky moral atmosphere of Pekin? In that metropolis of atrocities a woman has no name, and in all documents is designated only by her surname. Thus even the Imperial Consort would be described as "Yehonala, daughter of so-and-so." There, indeed, a woman's chastity is a priceless jewel, but being so precious it is perhaps not so very common. However, Pekin, the most licentious city in the universe, according to native reports, is surely awaiting the doom which overwhelmed two scriptural cities of odious memory; but the fire and brimstone of modern times do not come from Heaven, nor the thunder and lightning either. In the very heart of that metropolis the young Yehonala exhibited her charms to a mighty concourse of eunuchs! Poor soul! But the widow of an emperor must forsooth hide her face from the vulgar gaze of a wicked world. The people are prohibited from looking at her. Even high officials may not lift up their eyes to behold her sacred countenance. Chastity and virtue are heavenly gifts. Such a conspicuous example of feminine fidelity called for admiration. The Eastern Empress saw the outward decorum with satisfaction. The general public sang praises to the deceased monarch. But human passions, goaded beyond endurance, respect no artificial laws. At the crisis of emotional perturbation what does a woman care for the opinion of the world? An educated and refined product of modern civilisation avoids the temptations of a crisis. But what can you expect of a young Manchu female trained in the polluted and licentious seraglio of the dissolute Emperor Hsien-Feng?

Scandals, however, are very hard to suppress, especially when they relate to a person in high places, and more especially when the person concerned is not only a beautiful woman, but also the young widow of an emperor. It was noticed that the eunuchs were mostly young men with fine physique and comely features. Was artificial selection responsible for this highly satisfactory condition of the army of eunuchs? Darwinian principles apply everywhere in the domain of organic nature, but surely they stop short at the evolution of eunuchs. Imagination recalls the orgies and excesses of the Roman palaces, of the mediæval nobles of Europe, and of all oriental courts. The experienced student sees at once the guiding hand in the selection of the eunuchs behind all the glamour of the Court and the seclusion of the walls.

The simple-minded folks of Pekin recognised amongst the eunuchs of the Western Palace the faces of many young men who shortly before were students preparing for their examinations. What a transformation! Yet what did it matter to the public? No one openly objected. The common people whispered in inaudible accents, and the palace enjoyed its eternal round of pleasure.

The idle and curious, finding nothing more profitable to do, counted the number of young persons who entered the palace, became Court attendants, and then disappeared. Where had they gone? Perhaps in the Forbidden City there exist subterranean passages, and perhaps Aladdin's lamp is still in the palace of China. However, gossip spread like wildfire that young servitors of the Court suffered from sudden deaths within the walls of the Imperial city. A dead man reveals no secrets!

Such were the tales which circulated in Pekin and its environs when the graceful and charming Yehonala was the supreme mistress of the Western Palace. She spared nothing to decorate both her person and her palace, and lived in a grand Imperial style. Theatres, comedies, marionettes, and exhibitions of conjurers took their turns in keeping up the high festivals which the young Dowager loved so much.

No man could approach the Empress-Dowager's presence except, of course, eunuchs and blood relations. Thus these persons enjoy special privileges and facilities. What, then, became of men introduced into the Court disguised as eunuchs? Of course, they would have the same facilities of access as that class of attendant. To the initiated there is no mystery, but those who do not understand had better remain profoundly ignorant of the chamber intrigues of oriental courts!

What share the Western Empress-Dowager had in the selection of the eunuchs was inferred by a vulgar public, rather from the position she held as head of the palace than from actual knowledge of her doings. But she was nearly caught in a trap when she ventured to favour her personal attendants at the expense of the laws of the realm. Now, according to the statutes of the present dynasty, no eunuch, on pain of severe penalties, could leave the environs of the metropolis. Yet the Empress-Dowager Tzu Hsi was moved by her favourites to set at naught this very wholesome law. Ta Ann and Hsiao Ann, two notorious "body servants," received the permission of the Western Empress to leave Pekin and to proceed on a tour round the provinces for the purpose of enriching themselves by forcing contributions from mandarins and others. They paraded in right royal style, and entered the province of Shantung as Imperial envoys, demanding from the Governor a humble address of welcome and the *kowtow* ceremony. It happened, fortunately, that an exceedingly powerful and able man, Tin Pao Chen, was the Governor. He, knowing the law, and incensed at the pride and arrogance of the eunuchs, flatly refused to accord them any sort of reception; but secretly sent a courier to convey news of this affair to the Dowager-Empress Tzu Ann and to Prince Kung. The latter, in a great state of excitement, demanded an audience of the two regents. This was granted, and Prince Kung urged the necessity of issuing a warrant for the execution of the impudent "envoys." The Eastern Empress readily assented to the Prince's wishes, and the Prince rushed away with his warrant and despatched the fastest courier with the death-warrant against the two men to the Governor of Shantung. Tzu Hsi, the Western Empress, sat in silence, listened to the indignant words of Prince Kung, and formally assented to the warrant for the decapitation of her favourites. But when the audience was finished Yehonala went straight to her apartments and wrote out a counter-order, cancelling the death-warrant issued at the request of Prince Kung. However, she was too late, for when her messenger arrived at the Governor's *yamen*, two bleeding heads were stuck on poles as a warning to malefactors. Thwarted in her plans, and deprived of her favourites, the Empress-Dowager

Tzu Hsi realised for the first time the importance of having full powers. Henceforth she commenced to intrigue, and endeavoured to become paramount. The execution of Ta Ann and Hsiao Ann, which is recorded in an Imperial edict of the twelfth year of Tung-Chi, was the turning point in the career of Yehonala. She determined to be obeyed in future, and she would brook no further interference either with her pleasures or with her policy.

Naturally all sorts of scandals were heard of. These were so numerous that they would fill a good-sized volume if they were all written down. The worst, and perhaps unkindest of all, had reference to a visit of midwives to the palace and to the coming into this world of a boy, who still lives in the Western Palace under the name of Chiu Min.

The life which the Western Empress-Dowager had led unfitted her for the duties of maternity, though it is true she selected the virtuous Aluteh to be the spouse of her only son. The Emperor married in 1872, and the two Empresses-Dowager resigned their regency in 1873. It seemed that the Eastern Empress was rather glad to be relieved of responsibility, but the Western Empress-Dowager was not satisfied that her son should now be placed above her. Tung-Chi was by no means a wise or a strong ruler, but he had the advantage of a good education, and had been influenced by his tutors. The licentious wassails and the frivolous obscenities of the Western Palace were more than a filial son could bear, and as soon as he was fully invested with power he ordered a whole pack of insolent, pampered eunuchs to be severely punished. Open war was thus declared against his own mother, and by her conduct towards him she showed what a heart of stone she conceals within her bosom. In December, 1874, Tung-Chi was prostrated by an attack of small-pox, and was evidently recovering when he suddenly died, leaving behind a widow who was in time to become a mother. But before his death he had adopted a junior scion of his house as his heir. This adopted child of Tung-Chi is still alive, and is one of the few liberal-minded and progressive princes of Pekin. Tung-Chi had grave misgivings for the safety of his widow, and not long before he died he took his adopted son on his lap and, placing the Imperial crown on his head, called the attention of Aluteh to it. "Look," said he, "if that cap will stick on this child's head you may be assured of peace and safety." But neither the cap nor the child nor Aluteh was destined to remain as Tung-Chi wished.

The Empress-Mother could not forgive her son. She had by this time become completely changed. Inured to the excesses of the palace, her maternal instincts were deadened, and she had become a new creature not unknown in the annals of medical science. She showed no sign of grief on hearing of her son's death. Indeed, she smiled triumphantly. She set aside the wishes of Tung-Chi, and although his widow was pregnant, she insisted on appointing a successor to Hsien-Feng.

While she was coming to the front, the Eastern Empress had been yearly retreating to the background. In 1874 the Empress Tzu Ann was obliged to summon Li Hung Chang to escort the Imperial procession to the mausolea of the reigning family; and the occasion taught Yehonala what a useful ally Li Hung Chang could be. Without waiting for the birth of Tung-Chi's child, the Empresses selected Tsai T'ien, the son of Prince Suen, or Ch'un, to succeed as Emperor, with the title of Kuang Hsu.* Tsai T'ien was only four years of age. The selection was not quite a happy one. Prince Kung's son was well entitled to the throne, but there were cogent reasons for Yehonala to prefer Kuang Hsu. In the first place, he is a son of her own sister, and in the second, by his appointment as the successor of Hsien-Feng, not of Tung-Chi, Yehonala would remain in power as Dowager-Empress. Had a child been elected heir to Tung-Chi, Aluteh would have become Dowager and Yehonala would have had to resign. A brilliant *coup d'état*, achieved with the help of Li Hung Chang, had disposed of those who dared to oppose the will of the Empress-Dowager. The fact that Tung-Chi was left without an heir to offer sacrifices to his tablet was a gross violation of a well-established custom. A censor denounced this act of the Empresses as a crime, and committed suicide as a proof of his loyalty. But Yehonala was not moved. She was possessed of intense aversion to her son and everything connected with him. The disconsolate Aluteh tried to commit suicide, was rescued, but subsequently died in a shamefully neglected condition. Many well-informed people of Pekin believe that both she and the Emperor Tung-Chi were disposed of by poisoning. Her child was never born. Her father, a duke and a high official, was dismissed from the Grand Council, only to return to power as guardian of the heir-apparent, after an interval of twenty-five years, in January, 1900.

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* The title Kuang Hsu means "Illustrious Succession."—Ed.

The excesses of the Western Empress at length brought to a head the growing rivalry between the two women who had shown so much forbearance and such admirable tact. The crisis came when the Eastern Empress revealed to Yehonala the nature of the secret edicts relating to her. Though Tzu Ann was said to have destroyed the document before her, the Western Empress was determined henceforth to be independent.

In 1880 the Empress-Dowager Tzu Ann suddenly died. There was strong presumptive evidence of poisoning, but it is quite possible she died of heart failure. The Chinese story is that she partook of some favourite kickshaws specially prepared for her by Yehonala's relatives. She was seized with agonising pains soon after, and before the Court physicians could arrive she had expired.

The surviving Empress-Dowager was now free to act as she pleased. From the time when the cautious Tzu Ann died, the Western Empress has been rushing the Empire to the verge of ruin. Disaster followed disaster, the customs of ages were openly flouted and shamefully set at naught. Arbitrary government became the order of the day. Within the palace she thought of nothing but pleasures, and permitted all sorts of licentious extravagances in the motley multitude within it. Outside the seraglio her principal thoughts were engrossed in money-making, and, true to her evil instinct, she succeeded in completely demoralising all the departments of the Chinese administration. Bad and corrupt the Chinese Government had been for generations, but it was reserved for the Empress-Dowager Tzu Hsi to turn the machinery of the State into a vast mint, as it were, for supplying her with the enormous sums required for the maintenance of her pleasures.

The eunuch Li Lien Ying came to be very serviceable. He was a companion of the Empress-Dowager, and was also her agent in carrying on bargains with big officials. As the Empress-Mother could not meet her ministers privately, Li Lien Ying was the intermediary who got all the fabulous sums for his august mistress. Yung-lu, Kang-Yi, and Sun Yu Wen looked to the Empress-Dowager through this wretched Li. The money obtained was divided between Lien Ying and the Empress-Dowager. Li fell out with Yung-lu in 1899, and suddenly died in April, 1900. Was he poisoned? Indeed, yes!

Before leaving the eunuchs, we may remind some of our readers that many of those so-called do not come within that category at all, and that in the profligate Court of Pekin at present every eunuch has a female consort among the palace maids. Yet Colonel Denby, of the U.S. Diplomatic Service, had the temerity to laud the head of such a monstrous institution as the compeer of our own noble Queen. Yehonala must not be mentioned in the same breath with the name of her who has been all these years the paragon of womanhood, the ideal mother, the model wife, the faithful widow, and the adored Sovereign.*

* Her Majesty Queen Victoria died while these papers were passing through the Press.—ED.

CHAPTER VI

THE EMPRESS-DOWAGER SUPREME

THE death of the Eastern Empress left Tzu Hsi, the surviving widow of Hsien-Feng, in supreme power. She had already created a party of her own myrmidons, and was only waiting for an opportunity of removing all those officials who had openly sided with the deceased Empress-Dowager. Troubles were soon in store for her. The ambitious designs of French politicians ended in ruptures with the King of Annam, and from 1882 to 1884 China became involved in serious troubles with France. The Black Flags, under the reckless Liu Yung Fu, rose to fame, and the half-hearted measures of the French prolonged the irregular warfare and encouraged the undisciplined soldiers under the Chinese generals. France evidently did not want a war with China, and consequently, after demonstrating against Foochow and some ports in Tai-Wan, she consented to come to terms with China.

The Empress-Dowager Supreme

Although Annam was freed from the control of the Chinese Government, the latter claimed that its soldiers had been victorious, and the ignorant public gave Liu the credit of having driven out the French. The loss of Annam was seized by the Empress-Dowager as a pretext for dismissing from office the *protégés* of her deceased rival. Prince Kung, Li Hung Tsa, and Wen Tung Ho were dismissed, while the partisans of the Empress-Dowager filled their places. Prince Suen succeeded his brother in spite of the fact that he was the father of the reigning Sovereign. According to the requirements of filial piety, no father shall be placed in any position inferior to that of his son. But this point was overruled by the imperious Tzu Hsi. Li Hung Chang became the central figure of the Pekin Government, and succeeded in making himself the chief confidant of the Empress-Dowager. Among the princes we note the rising power of the Princes Li and Ching.* All these high officials, however, were parasites of their mistress, who became the absolute ruler of the Empire. She had only to wish, and what she desired was done.

Under her rule the Court degenerated in

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* Princes Li and Ching. *Vide* Appendix, § I.

morals as well as in the observance of the rules of decorum. The Government was run purely as a mercantile concern, and money became the only avenue to office. Peculation and corruption infested the Court and the *yamens* of Pekin; and those who were looking at the wholesale spoliation of the Empire predicted the speedy downfall of the Tsing dynasty.

When the Marquis Tseng, the famous son of Tseng Kuo Fang, returned from his distinguished career in the courts of Europe, it was hoped by the friends of China that he would use his knowledge and his influence to remedy the crying evils in the Chinese administration. Moreover, an article signed by him had appeared in *The Asiatic Quarterly Review* as an earnest of what might be expected of him. But, unfortunately for the Marquis, the "Awakened China" of his article existed only in his wish and in his brain; and when he returned to the mephitic air of Pekin he was probably as much disillusioned as were those who had looked upon him as the saviour of his country. The late Marquis certainly did everything within his means to bring about a more rational policy in the Tsungli Yamen and in the Cabinet of Pekin.

But he was too progressive, and he was too much Europeanised. Opposition against him gradually took shape, and, as usual, found the Empress-Dowager ever ready on the side of the Conservatives. Tseng was not a man who would readily yield, but he died prematurely in 1890—it is persistently asserted from poisoning.

The metropolitan officials lapsed into their old ways. Most of their time was taken up with gambling parties, theatrical entertainments, and feasting. Every one of them made a huge fortune, and through Li Lien Ying the Dowager-Empress had a share of their illegal perquisites. The Empire seemed again to recover, and the Dowager-Empress plunged heedlessly into all kinds of extravagancies to gratify her pride and her imagination. While funds were urgently needed for public works and for the establishment of colleges, the Empress-Dowager was spending millions of *taels* on erecting a magnificent mausoleum for the reception of her own body after death. Unheard of sums were expended on the palaces. The Yuan Ming Yuan,* burned in 1860, was restored; but either the pride or the superstition of the Empress-Dowager dictated the necessity of a separate palace for her special use. The I Ho Yuan was laid out in lavish style, regardless of expense. The name *I Ho* means "Felicitous Harmony," and the palace and its gardens may thus be called "The Garden of Felicitous Harmony." This sounds poetical enough, and is, in fact, an allusion to the famous saying, *I yang tien ho* ("Happy life and heavenly peace"), said to characterise the last years of the aged. Whatever may be the value of the name, there is no question as to the immense cost of the palace and its spacious gardens. Millions of *taels** had been spent in furnishing the halls and apartments. About thirteen years ago £3,000,000 were voted by the Imperial Treasury for the purpose of buying new warships. But the voracious Empress-Dowager swallowed the whole amount, and squandered the money on her earthly paradise. The money had to be accounted for, and to her nothing was simpler in the world. On the portals of one of the palace gates she caused to be inscribed the legend, "*Yamen* of the Admiralty." There! The three millions had been spent towards the strengthening of the navy! Even this amount did not satisfy her, and she ordered the metropolitan officials to contribute towards its building. The Pekin mandarins, mostly her own creatures, were not very keen, but they scraped together about 260,000 *taels.** On the occasion of her sixtieth birthday, in 1894, she received in presents in value the fabulous sum of 100,000,000 *taels*,† a good many millions of which she patriotically poured into the war chest during a fit of war fever. Yet when the country was a-begging for money to pay off the Japanese indemnity, she had the callousness to "pocket" for her own use a large proportion of the loan obtained from the natives of the Empire, to make up, as it were, for her liberality in 1894.

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* Better known to English readers as the Summer Palace. —ED.

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* The *tael*, which is not a coin but a weight of silver, is worth about 2*s*. 10*d*. at present rates of exchange.—ED.

Besides the two above-mentioned palaces there are three others reserved for her special use. The annual expenditure for the up-keep of these must be enormous. When we consider that in these buildings there live 3,000 eunuchs besides 10,000 females, we can readily calculate what it must cost to keep up festivities in continuous succession. The daily expenditure on meat alone for the inmates of the palaces amounts to about 1000 taels.*

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* £36,833

† Not far short of a million and a half sterling.—ED.

When the Eastern Empress was still alive the Government was distinguished for the magnificent charity showered upon the people during the terrible famine in Shansi in 1878. The senior Empress-Dowager ordered the palaces to go without meat, and the money so saved was devoted to the famine fund. Since her death, though famine has been a frequent occurrence and destitution and misery have often followed in the wake of inundation, the Empress-Dowager Tzu Hsi has not yet been known to have done very much for their relief.

The infant of Prince Ch'un was brought up under the direct care of the Empress-Dowager. She was exceedingly strict as a disciplinarian, and on the slightest provocation she would insist on the little Emperor ***kow-towing*** to her. Nor did she spare his growing mind, for she indulged in the choicest terms of the Manchu Billingsgate to show him her temper. Continual bullying and perpetual abuse will make brutes of us all. Even a Manchu emperor is mortal, "Son of Heaven" though one-third of mankind choose to call him. We need not wonder that the palace inmates say the Emperor is *afraid* of the Empress-Dowager.

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* About £150.

Yehonala had enough to do to attend to the heavy duties of her high office, as well as to superintend the varied programme of her amusements. It takes time to dress in the latest approved fashion; it takes longer to obliterate one's identity by wig, rouge, powder, and poor rags. On a certain occasion some wicked mortal eyes recognised Li Lien Ying, and beside him a palace maid, to judge from her dress, but what features! Why, they were the very image of Her Imperial Majesty Tzu-Hsi-Tuan-Yu-Kang-Yi-Chao-Yu-Chuang-Cheng-Sho-Kung-Chin-Hsien-Chung-Shih! But human visions are not infallible. It might be a case of mistaken identity, or it might not.

The infant Kuang Hsu developed day by day. He became an intelligent boy, but he was trained by the terrible Tzu Hsi to regard her as a lamb does a tiger. He was looked after by women and eunuchs, who were all trusted slaves of the great Tzu Hsi. He proved himself an apt pupil, and was very eager to learn. It was his exceedingly good fortune that his tutor was Weng Tung Ho, the trusted Minister of the late Eastern Dowager-Empress. Weng was an intelligent *literatus*, who, though proud of Chinese learning and anxious to preserve the traditions and usages of the Empire, was yet alive to the excellence and magnificence of Western civilisation. It was a great deal in Pekin that a high official should know so much. The ignorance of the princes and nobles is simply pitiful. An example will more forcibly illustrate this than any amount of writing. When the treaty of peace with France was being discussed in Pekin in 1884, Prince Kung was at the head of the Ministers. He was considered by all foreigners as a very able and intelligent man. This he was, being also very tactful; but he was also painfully wanting in the knowledge of some very necessary elementary facts. Well, he went on discussing and arguing as to whether China ought to renounce Annam altogether, or to retain a portion of it. Then he quietly put the question whether Annam was a maritime or an inland province! Would you believe it, the Tsungli Yamen had no map of Annam, for the protection of which China had brought on a war with France? Was there such a map among the natives in all Pekin? Fortunately there was a bookshop kept by a syndicate of progressive Chinese scholars, mostly Cantonese. In it were maps of all the countries in the world, and also, *mirabile dictu*, excellent treatises on universal geography, in which Pekin appeared in proper perspective as a tiny speck of Asia, and China was neither the centre nor the greater part of the world. Delusions! But in times of trouble any help is welcome. So the Cabinet Ministers did not despise the assistance of the map and the treatise on geography. There was a flutter in the shop. What high mandarin wanted a map? Why, Prince Kung himself! Then the secrets were revealed.

Under the influence of Weng Tung Ho, the young Emperor Kuang Hsu grew up to be a diligent young man, whose mind was open to receive new ideas, and whose interest and curiosity in the world outside China were maintained by the perusal of the modern translated literature, selected by Weng himself. Some years ago the Emperor resolved to study English. Two students of the Tung Wen College, Messrs. Chang and Shen, were recommended to His Majesty, who showed them great consideration, and allowed them to sit in his presence, while others, even princes and grandees, had to kneel and prostrate themselves. Dr. Martin was frequently consulted by his pupils, the Imperial tutors, and has borne testimony to the eagerness of Kuang Hsu to speak and write the English language. In fact, the Emperor was progressing so far that he meditated delivering a speech in English to the Foreign Ministers at a New Year audience. But the envoys refused to attend, and after that the Emperor's zeal seemed to flag. However, Kuang Hsu is a proficient in the Chinese, Manchu, and Mongolian languages.

In theory the Son of Heaven is an absolute ruler, but in practice his powers are very circumscribed. By a very careful system of education, the prospective heir to the throne is so trained that he will respect the existing machinery of government, and that he will not try innovations. On the one hand he is taught his obligations to Heaven, and on the other hand his duties to his ancestors and to his people. He is, of course, instructed in the procedure of the Court and of the government of the Empire. The Emperor is obliged to consult the Boards of Administration, and generally he endorses their recommendations. These details may help us to understand how greatly hampered the Emperor must be. One must be nothing less than a genius to have escaped the trammels of such a thoroughgoing and prolonged course of training on what may be called the fundamentals of conservatism. Hence Kuang Hsu was fortunate that his preceptor was a progressive man. We shall see what this progressiveness has cost both Weng himself and his august pupil.

In 1888 the marriage of Kuang Hsu was arranged. The Empress-Dowager selected the daughter of her own brother to be the wife of the Emperor. The junior Yehonala was described in the edicts as being "dignified and virtuous." By the marriage of the Emperor with her niece the Dowager-Empress hoped to perpetuate the connection between her own family and the Imperial clan. We may also attribute to this, as events have turned out, fortunate connection, the circumstance that the poor Emperor Kuang Hsu has not been given his quietus. When we come to estimate the character of the Empress-Dowager, we must bear in mind that she is a daughter of a Manchu plebeian, and that by this marriage of Kuang Hsu with her niece additional lustre is shed on her own family. Nor must we forget that Kuang Hsu is also the son of her own sister.

The Emperor Kuang Hsu was impatient to assume full control of the government of his Empire as soon as he became of age, but his ambitious aunt was not very anxious to retire from power. In 1887, through the representations of her advisers, she nominally handed the reins of government to the Emperor, not, however, without reservations. The Emperor was obliged to sign an agreement which virtually took away all his powers as the responsible head of the Empire. The wily Empress-Dowager would only resign the regency on condition that her position remained secure. Among other rights and privileges which the Empress-Dowager reserved to herself, were the sole control of all high officials of the second and first rank, and the examination and control of all State documents. Hence Kuang Hsu was practically an Emperor only in name. The high officials knew that he could neither promote nor degrade them, and therefore not unnaturally looked entirely to the Empress-Dowager for their advancement. By this astute proceeding Yehonala safeguarded the position of her parasites, and was able, through the services of Li Lien Ying, to continue her profitable business of selling offices to the highest bidder.

Kuang Hsu felt the situation very keenly, but he was powerless, as the most influential mandarins were all the creatures of the Empress-Dowager. He used to call himself "Kua Chun," or Lonely Emperor, and described himself to his confidants as a mere "secretary to high officials and intermediary" between them and his aunt. This, in fact, was his position. Besides, all the misgovernment was laid at his door, but all the successes were described as the results of the Empress-Dowager's sagacity.

Tzu Hsi sat in audience "behind the curtain," to quote the Chinese phrase. She was not accessible to the ordinary grandees, and was to be reached chiefly through the arch-eunuch Li. Consequently Kang-Yi, Yung-lu, Lu Yun-men, and men like them flattered Li Lien Ying, and humoured him in every possible way.

Though the Empress-Dowager has in later years obtained a thorough mastery of the Chinese language, it is to be feared that she has only a very vague and misleading vision of the world outside her palaces. It is the misfortune of the country that she sees the Empire and the world beyond it only through the distorted intellectual optics of her three creatures — Kang-Yi, Yung-lu, and Prince Ching—men not conspicuous for their perspicacity or for their mastery of even elementary facts.

For many years the power of Li Hung Chang was the greatest wonder of the Empire. As viceroy of the metropolitan province Li Hung Chang was the most important vassal of the Emperor; but he was known to be the favourite of the Empress-Dowager. When, through the intrigues and troubles in Corea and through the advice of Yuan Shi-kai, the Chinese resident envoy there, the Chinese Government resolved to send troops into "the Hermit Kingdom," Li Hung Chang was at the head of the war party, and the Empress-Dowager was in high expectations that a great military triumph was to crown the glory of her long, and on the whole, not unhappy reign. Japan was too much on the alert to be caught napping; the China-Japan War commenced all at once by the "Kowshing" affair, and at one blow hundreds of the best-drilled soldiers of the army of Li Hung Chang were sent to watery graves. The Japanese campaigns were as brilliant as they were skilfully planned. After the fall of Port Arthur, the impregnable fortress of the Far East, Taku entsin were threatened, and the doom n would only be a question of time. d lady in Pekin made preparations for t to Shansi, and, for a time, her stout esisted the temptations to yield to the rfs"; but at last, when Wei-hai-wei was ed and the magnificent ships were all her zeal gave way to reason. The Manchus were in a great state of excitement and alarm. The young Emperor was in the wretched state when the soul is alternately harassed by indignation and despair. He could see no hope. If Li Hung Chang, the wonderful old man, could not resist the victorious Japanese, he knew there was no other mandarin who could. He would have liked to behead Li Hung Chang straight away. This would be barbarous, unjust, and ungrateful. But Kuang Hsu was only showing his temper as a Manchu Emperor. However, the Court was obliged to turn to Li Hung Chang for advice, and the "grand old man" of China bravely risked his life, when his reputation had been cast to the winds, to acknowledge that further resistance was impossible. It was pitiful to think of the proud old soldier-scholar, a suppliant messenger, supplicating for peace at the feet of the "Dwarfs." But it was a lesson very much needed by the arrogant self-sufficient mandarins, who have brought the magnificent Empire to its present tottering state. Soon after the conclusion of the war the Imperial tutor, Weng Tung Ho, was meditating the introduction of railways and mining and planning the scheme of a new university. But his ideas, when embodied in the form of edicts, met with the opposition of the Empress-Dowager and her party. The Emperor, though powerless, encouraged Weng Tung Ho in every way. His scheme was embodied in thirty draft edicts, but the council officials would have none of it.

Domestic troubles in 1894 soon added to the affliction under which the young and impatient Emperor was suffering. The continual defeat of the Chinese was causing a general depression of feeling in Pekin when the festivals connected with the sixtieth birthday of the great Yehonala were being hurried through. Li Lien Ying, the favourite of the Empress-Dowager, was a grandee, whose conceit was such that he must show his high position in the palace by open affront to the great mandarins who entered the Imperial residence to pay their respects to the old lady.

By right Li should have been by the side of his mistress, should have been among the first to *kowtow* to her, being an inmate of the palace. But Li had an inordinate idea of his own importance. He was too big a person to bestir himself early in the morning. He quietly swaggered along as all the high officials were retiring; but, unfortunately for him, the Emperor came across him, and instantly ordered him to be bastinadoed for impudence and insolence.

The same evening there were disgraceful scenes in the Imperial harem. The old lady visited the Emperor's seraglio, and vented her wrath on two unoffending concubines of Kuang Hsu. Nobody knew what was the cause of this flutter, but there was no doubt that the beating of the Emperor's concubines had something to do with the thrashing which Li Lien Ying received during the day.

This was not all. The old woman was determined to show that she would brook no interference with the inmates of her apartments. Kuang Hsu must be made to feel sorry for his audacity. Too cunning to touch the person of the Emperor himself, the Empress-Dowager showed, in an unmistakable manner, her great displeasure, and adopted roundabout measures to inflict mental suffering on her nephew, if Court etiquette and common decency debarred her from wreaking her vengeance on the Emperor himself, all on account of a wretched eunuch. The distinguished scholar and official, Weng Tung Ho, was dismissed from the Emperor's study and prohibited from again entering the Yü Ching Palace, where the Emperor had spent so many fruitful hours with his teacher. Others also suffered, and in a short time all the personal friends of Kuang Hsu were removed from him, by disgrace or dismissal. One faithful eunuch was moved, and good soul that he was, he raised his impotent voice against the heartless tyranny of the infuriated woman. K'ao Lien Chye, the victim of a brutal custom, emasculated though he was, stood in the Audience Hall more manly than the whole pack of grand dignitaries. These were callous, devoid of the higher sensibility, and were engrossed with one sole thought—sensuality and the means whereby this could be gratified. The eunuch broke out in a language which must have been a true example of the divine *afflatus;* to the eloquence of a Demosthenes he added the coolness of a Socrates, and, defying the enraged Empress-Dowager, he boldly pointed out the suicidal policy she had been pursuing. "Sap the foundation of authority, and beware of the consequences! Make the Emperor a hopeless and helpless desperado, and the great Tsing dynasty must totter to its inevitable fall. Restore the Emperor to full power, or beware!" Words like these fell from the pale and quivering lips. Their effect was electric on the cowardly mandarins. Instant decapitation was K'ao's reward; and poor Kuang Hsu was deprived of another faithful servant.

The unexpected boldness of the eunuch alarmed the cunning Dowager-Empress. She feared further troubles, and sought means to depose Kuang Hsu. But Prince Kung, who had returned to power on the occasion of Li Hung Chang's degradation, interceded on behalf of the nephew, whose seat on the throne had been so firmly established, principally through his own services. The Empress-Dowager considered the matter, and so far approved of the Prince's views that she did not carry out her wish, but contented herself with commanding the Emperor to be his own prisoner in the restored Summer Palace. This palace is situated outside the walls of Pekin, about five miles to the north-west. By removing the Emperor from the metropolis the

Empress-Dowager hoped to wean him from the party of progressive men who were accumulating in the capital, under the protection of Weng Tung Ho and the Emperor himself.

The vixenish Imperial widow of Hsien-Feng planned deeply if slowly, and betrayed not a little of the enchantress in her diabolical preparations to ruin both the body and the soul of her nephew, who had given her offence. The Yuan Ming Yuan was intended by her to be a Palace of Circe, wherein, by temptations to riotous living, men would make brutes of themselves. Happily for Kuang Hsu, his aunt lacked the potions which made the sorceress of the Homeric legend so successful. Perhaps, like Ulysses of old, Kuang Hsu was provided with the talisman of Mercury, in the shape of the solid principles taught him by his tutor, and was thereby able to resist the brutalising effects of the bacchanalia carried on in the palace without interruption. Surrounded by gourmets, rakes, and gamblers, Kuang Hsu did not show his contempt for them, but secretly treasured in his heart the anguish produced by his wretched environment, and appeared to those in Court as if he had lost his senses. Usually sedate and somewhat pensive by nature, he became decidedly melancholic in outward appearance, and only joined in the gambling parties when specially requested by the Empress-Dowager, who frequently visited the palace to see that "the amusements" were being thoroughly carried through. It must be remembered that this sort of thing was not altogether unusual. Only in the present case special attention was taken to involve the Emperor in all the frivolities and excesses in order to unman him for the arduous duties of government. We dare not affirm that poor Kuang Hsu came out of the ordeal unscathed. He was neither saint nor angel, but an erring man, like most mortals. But he certainly did not succumb as his enemies expected him to do, and although they succeeded in making him look "half dead," "apathetic," and "dull," and in circulating the report that the Emperor was given to frivolity and vice, Kuang Hsu retained enough of his character as a high-principled prince to enable him to appreciate the efforts of Kang Yu Wei, and to embark on the perilous voyage of constitutional reform in unknown seas.

The example of the palace was naturally reflected on the world of Pekin officials. Business was neglected, and the dignitaries of state whiled away their time in childish frivolities, in gambling contests, and in other ways peculiar to the high folks of Pekin.

CHAPTER VII

FROM THE REFORM CRISIS TO THE ANTI-FOREIGN OUTBREAK

THERE was still another cup of bitterness for Kuang Hsu. Within the walls of Yuan Ming Yuan he heard nothing of his Empire, not even a little scrap of political news of the capital which was his own! But far away in Shantung two missionaries of German nationality succumbed to the *amok** of the desperate villagers, goaded on to their crime by the culpable connivance, if not the actual encouragement, of the great hater of foreigners, the Governor Li Peng Heng. The Germans pounced upon Kiaochau, and a considerable tract of Shantung, the Holy Land,† had to be signed away. That concession of land to the mail-fisted Emperor of the West had to be sanctioned by the prisoner Kuang Hsu, and as his signature was indispensable, the necessity for parting with a part of an ancient province had to be announced to him, with as full an explanation as the secretaries dared to offer. The Emperor had felt very keenly the loss of Formosa, and was quite unprepared for another carving out of the Empire. He had scarcely recovered from his agony and surprise when the loss of Liaotung was threatened, and with it the cession of Wei-hai-wei to Great Britain became imperative. The aged Prince Kung retired from office, feeling that he was no longer the young man who treated with the Foreign Powers in Pekin, and died in the spring of 1898 in sorrow, and with chagrin at the fate of the Empire.

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* *Amok* is the Malay term for a murderous attack, of a kind not uncommon in the Far East. It has come into the English language in the expression "to run amuck."—ED.

† The province of Shantung is called the Holy Land because of its historical and religious associations. Here Confucius

The blow was too heavy for Kuang Hsu to bear. He became quite excited, and openly spoke of abdication. He consigned to the flames all the antiquated volumes in his library, and swore that he would do his utmost to set

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and Mencius were born; and here stands the Tai Shan, or Great Mountain, now covered with temples, shrines, and religious symbols of every description, from the top of which Shun (see note on p. 34) is said to have offered sacrifice to heaven more than four thousand years ago.—ED.

the Empire right. Prince Ching, a near relative of Kuang Hsu, was touched by the Emperor's unhappy state of mind, and repeatedly begged of the Empress-Dowager to allow Kuang Hsu to return to the capital and resume his duties. Yehonala herself was moved, and in a fit of good nature, revealing for a moment her womanly tenderness, she even caressed the nephew whom she had made so unhappy. She restored him to power, and even promised to take a personal interest in reforms.

The Emperor returned to Pekin, and at once began to gather around him his old associates—chief among whom was the tutor Weng Tung Ho. No sooner had he started than the Empress-Dowager forgot all her fair promises, and remembering only her old scores against Weng, she had the aged reformer dismissed from the public service and banished to his native place. This was not a good omen for the coming changes. Before Weng went he had succeeded in bringing to the notice of the Emperor the merits and capacity of Kang Yu Wei, "the modern sage" of Canton, who, Odysseus-like, travelled far and wide in the great Empire, to gather knowledge of men and things.

The Empress-Dowager watched the progress of the reform movement as a cat watches a mouse. Surrounded by the implacable enemies of any kind of change, she became more and more embittered against those daring men who were "poisoning" the mind of the facile Emperor. The Conservatives began to consider that Kuang Hsu was doing all he could to ruin the Empire. To them he appeared to be a sort of Caliph Vathek, who would sacrifice his Empire and his people for the gratification of illusions, which the crafty Kang Yu Wei had succeeded in putting into his head. Yuan Shi-kai was considered by the reformers as one of themselves, and consequently was kept informed of all their secret movements. The Dowager-Empress had gained such notoriety for her successful rôle in one *coup d'état* after another that the Emperor rightly feared that she might suddenly change her mind and bring about the calamity which he dreaded. With this object in view, it was decided to surround the Empress-Dowager's palace with a cordon of soldiers and make her a prisoner (even as she had done to the Emperor) in one of her own palaces. This was an exceedingly daring and risky plot, but it was Hobson's choice with poor Kuang Hsu. Yuan Shi-kai was entrusted with this work of terrible responsibility. He was the only available military officer with sufficient power, apparently on the side of the Emperor, but he was a vacillating and weak man. Instead of surrounding the Empress-Dowager's palace with soldiers, he went and confessed the whole thing, with the result that the Empress-Dowager became aware of the designs of the Emperor and his coadjutors. As soon as Yung-lu became acquainted with the movements of Yuan Shi-kai he commenced to take military precautions at once, and, as we have shown elsewhere,* the success of the *coup d'état* was due to his alacrity.

The Empress-Dowager suddenly sent for the Emperor, and when he appeared before her she was so furious that she gave him a sharp slap on the face with her fan. The Emperor knelt before his aunt with a Damocles' sword over his neck. He confessed everything. It was fortunate for him that he was the son of Yehonala's sister and the husband of Yehonala's brother's daughter. He was there and then made a prisoner, and was despatched under a strong guard of eunuchs to the Yintai Lake, within the palace grounds of the Imperial city. Thus, on 21st September, 1898, the Empress-Dowager again returned to power, after having carried through three revolutions within forty years, connected with the reigns of three emperors. It must not be imagined that she alone was responsible for all the things done in her name; she became a perfect tool in the hands of Kang-Yi, Yung-lu, and Prince Ching. Having disposed of her nephew, she resolved to enter upon another period of power and glory. She was no longer young. Her passions must have cooled down; but apparently avarice, greed of power, and love of glory lingered in her, and tempted her to assume supreme charge of the Empire. We can scarcely doubt that she was quite at the mercy of Yung-lu and Kang-Yi, for all her acts betrayed the unmistakable policy of the reactionary Manchus who besieged her palaces.

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* *Vide infra*, p. 178.

It is needless to repeat the legends of all the atrocious cruelties alleged to have been committed by the old lady against her august nephew. We may safely say that many of these stories have no basis in fact, and that Kuang Hsu's illness might have arisen in the ordinary course of the vicissitudes of human life. That Yung-li and Kang-Yi, however, would have hailed the death of Kuang Hsu could be proved from the lying edicts which were issued by these traitors. The lot of Kuang Hsu, in his island prison, could hardly be pleasant, and there were strange stories of his attempts to effect an escape.

To blame the Empress-Dowager for all sorts of imaginary cruelties inflicted on the Emperor became the fashion of certain political factions; but this blind onslaught on the character of such a person only recoiled with terrible effect on the heads of those who persisted in wild abuse without possessing either the means or the power to carry out their threats. The reformers incurred the implacable hatred of the Empress-Dowager, and as Kang Yu Wei was unable to demonstrate his power, Pekin and the North became no place for him and his friends.

The *coup d'état* completed the overthrow of the party of progress, and the Manchus made one supreme effort to cut off this Chinese delusion of progress, root and branch. The most bigoted and conservative mandarins were promoted, and everyone suspected of sympathy with the great renaissance of the South was severely reprimanded and cautioned, or, more often, cashiered and disgraced. Liu Kun-Yi, the most sensible of all the Chinese provincial mandarins, respectfully attended to his duties, and refrained from interfering with those above him. He was suspected of pro-reform sympathies; but, being a very strong man, the Manchus left him alone. His colleague, Chang Chi Tung, became a political turncoat, and as he has approved of the Vicar of Bray policy his attitude need not cause surprise to any who know China and the Chinese. Chang Ho, the Governor of Hupeh, was cashiered, and since so many had suffered, no one further dared to criticise the Government.

The Manchus set about to complete the organisation with which they hoped to exterminate or overawe the followers of Kang Yu Wei, and to wreak vengeance on those foreign nations that had the impudence to demand the cession of Manchurian territory. The dangerous power entrusted to Yung-lu was causing serious anxiety to those Chinese who, though they did not agree with the revolutionary ideas of Kang Yu Wei, were not altogether wedded to the insane crusade on which the Manchus were launched. The Hanlins have always been distinguished for the daring of some of their members in critical periods of the nation's history. The acts of a few such patriots redeem to a no small extent the general obsequiousness and pharisaic blindness of these arrogant academicians. There was, therefore, considerable excitement in the official world when the Hanlin* Shen P'eng hurled his strongly worded memorials against the Empress-Dowager's henchmen, indicting several charges of treason against the Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the Empire, the redoubtable Yung-lu and his colleagues. The Chinese can appreciate conspicuous honesty and courage, though they rarely exhibit either. Shen P'eng became the hero of the hour. The reformers claimed him as an adherent, and the Chinese officials admired him in their hearts. But Shen paid heavily for his temerity, for he was immediately arrested, and was condemned to penal servitude for life. This exceedingly severe measure threatened the independence of the Hanlins; but the triumvirate of the traitors Kang-Yi, Yung-lu, and Prince Ching was absolute in Pekin. Henceforth the Hanlins watched, with paralysed arms, the speedy degeneration of the court and government, and the "Forest of Pencils"* penned no further indictments against those in authority.

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* Graduates of the fourth degree, members of the Imperial Academy.—ED.

The new state of affairs in the capital settled down into a life-and-death struggle between Manchus and Chinese. The Empress-Dowager, no longer able to resist the influence of her own creatures, yielded to the demands of the Manchus, and authorised the steady, if gradual, substitution of Chinese by Manchus in the metropolis and everywhere. The racial animosity was rekindled. Manchus could no longer tolerate an influential Chinese in the capital, and even Li Hung Chang had to be sacrificed. The old and discredited Li had the wisdom to recognise the irreconcilable contention to which the parties were committed, and being a prudent man, anxious to preserve his fortune and his skin, he took time by the forelock and anticipated his eventual removal from Pekin by requesting his old friend and mistress to appoint him to the rich viceroyalty of the Liang Kuang.

The Empress-Dowager seemed to show in her vacillations that she was no longer the same person she had been even two years before. The worry and fear which the dangers of oriental palace intrigues ever inspired those in authority preyed on her mind. She seemed to have lost her power of decisive action, and to have acted, now as if actuated by fear, and now as if powerless to restrain the impetuous zeal of her parasites. She retired to the background and became the tool of the Manchu clique, whom she had invested with plenary powers.

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* The *Hanlin*, or Imperial Academy.—Ed.

We need not be surprised that there is no love lost between Her Imperial Majesty and Kang Yu Wei. The writings of the reformer, spread broadcast throughout the world, did not redound to the glory of the renowned Tzu Hsi; but they indeed raised her to that "bad eminence" in which it is to be feared she will ever remain, in spite of Colonel Denby and other admirers. The Chinese abroad have been roused by the eloquence of the exiled reformers, and have been fired with indignation by the atrocious persecutions to which they were subjected.

The old Empress-Dowager became quite powerless when the Boxers reached Pekin, for we heard very little of her exercising her authority after Prince Tuan had openly assumed the leadership of the Boxers. At present we are not able to say more definitely than that she was up to the beginning of June, 1900, the secret patroness of the anti-foreign crusade.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHARACTER OF TZU HSI

WE have presented to our readers glimpses of the life of the great Empress-Dowager of China. She is indeed a remarkable woman. We have examined her public acts, and peeped into the recesses of her palaces. We have glossed in polite language the indecent vulgarities of Pekin gossip and scandal. But we must not estimate the character of Yehonala simply from her public career, or solely from furtive observations of her private life. To arrive at a just appreciation of the versatile personality of the aged Empress-Dowager we must examine her from all points of view, taking proper account of the numerous and varied facts which adorn or disgrace her character.

A figure in history should never be considered apart from its surroundings. Neither Queen Elizabeth nor Queen Victoria could be understood without a knowledge of contemporary culture and habits. Likewise we must be careful to remember that the Empress-Dowager was brought up in the home of a Pekin Manchu. Before she could understand her own vague feelings, begotten of her development towards womanhood, she was ushered into the tainted atmosphere of the Imperial seraglio. She indulged in the pleasures and frivolities of the palace. She did what we must expect every female in her position and with her education to do. But she did more. She did not abandon herself to pleasures, but, possessing the instinct of genius, she husbanded her resources to please her Imperial master with all the arts and artifices in which her sex has ever excelled. Hence the fascination with which she bound the weak and dissolute Emperor. The same feminine qualities made slaves and devotees of all the dignitaries of State who subsequently came in touch with her. She was strong-headed, as most pretty young girls could easily learn to be. She was jealous, as most women are; but she did what most women would fail to do. She ruled her husband and befriended her senior rival, the Empress Tzu Ann. The complex elements in her character distinctly displayed themselves while she was yet a junior concubine. They irresistibly bore her onward in her triumphant rise to power. She was feared from the beginning, but none dared to essay her removal except the ill-fated Kuang Hsu; and the world has learned what consequences attended his attempt. It is perhaps not a little creditable to the fame of Yehonala that she surmounted all the enervating influences of her environment, and rose superior to all the hindrances which would have kept her in the background. The crimes and the vices, which must ever stain her name, are but the normal incidents of the life of oriental harems. We must not judge the Empress-Dowager of China by the standard of morality or amenity which prevails in the court of Queen Victoria. But we may find a standard in the Imperial Kiosk of Constantinople, or in the palaces of the Medicis in mediæval times.

Let us now look at her as a woman and a mother. Proud of her charms, she spared no expense to set them forth; but the eyes for which they were originally intended were destined soon to close for ever. After the death of her husband, she was obliged to exhibit her beauty to vulgar eyes within her palace. With the passions of a great woman, she was strong in her love as well as in her hate. She was sentimental, and we have seen that she did not despise the keepsakes which the unhappy Su Suen stealthily sent to her.* She was such a determined woman, her feelings were so overwhelming, that it was fortunate for the peace of Pekin that Prince Su Suen was beheaded, and thus removed for ever. She was a very keen student, probably because her ambition early tempted her to aspire to the highest pinnacle of authority. However, she was an exceedingly prudent schemer, and reserved all her intelligence and resources until the proper moment. When she showed her hand, she was able to reckon upon certain success. The brilliant *coup d'état* by which she secured the succession of her son's throne for his nephew Kuang Hsu amply proved her resourcefulness and her fearless daring. To say that she is superstitious and is addicted to the pietism of the northern Buddhists is to affirm her Manchu characteristics. She was not a good mother. No woman leading the life which she led could be a mother in the higher sense of that word. "Sensuality," as Professor Lombroso says, "has multiple and imperious needs," and need we wonder that a young woman whose time is fully occupied with her pleasures did not show the child of her dead husband the devotion and affection of the normal mother?

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* *Vide ante*, p. 80.

Certain traits in the character of Yehonala stand out prominently in remarkable combination. Their development has not been progressive and continuous, but time and occasion have brought out now one feature and now another. Set before your imagination the stately carriage and gorgeous equipage of the haughty Empress. Recall the petty squabbles of the palace and the wretched scenes with eunuchs. Place her religiosity beside the terrible vengeance with which she has ever visited all those who have dared to oppose her. Remember the crimes which she either instigated or committed through her orders. Behold the charming womanly virtues by which she impressed her personality on Sir Claude Macdonald, the other Ministers, and their wives. Have the foreign ladies not gone away from her presence delighted with her gifts, remembering her only as "the benevolent old lady"? Yes; the Empress-Dowager's character is intelligible only to the psychologist, and is by no means unfamiliar to the historian or to the student of abnormal humanity. But we could not have arrived at this conclusion until we had analysed her actions to discover the psychic basis underlying them.

Ancient and modern history furnishes a large number of women who are the parallels of the Empress-Dowager Tzu Hsi. Is it burning jealousy which excites to crime? The behaviour of Yehonala in the embraces of Hsien-Feng finds its analogue in the criminal intrigues of Fulvia in ancient Rome. If we want an example of depravity in the wife of an Emperor, may we not find it in the vicious Messalina, the empress and wife of Claudius, who expiated her crimes in A.D. 48? Chinese history is already stained with the heinous misdeeds of two Imperial concubines, the wicked and devilish Ta-Chi, and the licentious and ambitious Wu Chao, better known as Wu Tse T'ien.* But in history the person to whom the Empress-Dowager may be most appropriately likened is Catharine de Medici, who, in her unbridled profligacy and reckless extravagance, is the exact prototype of Yehonala. Add to this general parallelism the

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* Concubine of Tai-tsung, founder of the Tang dynasty; afterwards wife of his son Kau-tsung, and sole empress for a long period after her husband's death (684-705 A.D.). She was a Chinese Athaliah, and the historians do not spare her memory.—ED.

Empress-Dowager's complicity in the anti-foreign crusade, which has led up to the massacre of missionaries and the assault on the legations, and we have the exact counterpart of the struggle between the Guises and the Huguenots, which culminated in the terrible slaughter of St. Bartholomew.

Without the magic of Circe, she possesses all the resources of the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, who confessed her crimes of poisoning, and was executed in Paris in 1676. We have referred to the wonderful palace of I Ho Yuan,* and in this lavish expenditure she resembles the renowned Semiramis, the founder of the gardens and palaces of Babylon, the wicked Queen, of whom Dante sang in the *Inferno*—

> "O'er many tongues was Empress. She in vice,
> Of Luxury was so shameless, that she made
> Liking be shameful by promulged decree,
> To clear the blame she had herself incurred."

We must now draw to a close our study of the character of Yehonala. We must admit that she is a genius of a kind; and we are compelled to conclude that she is not a normal woman. Her chequered career, commenced under such suspicious circumstances, has been prolonged far beyond the span usually allotted to the women of her race. Yehonala's first experience of the power of the foreigners was the shock sustained by the capitulation of Pekin and the burning of the Summer Palace. She enjoyed the benefits of a recuperated China, rescued from the Taiping rebels by the aid of "the red-haired barbarians" whom she hated. In the height of her power and glory she was preparing to observe her sixtieth birthday on an unprecedented scale when troubles with Japan tempted her to look forward to a glorious triumph in foreign war as the crowning achievement of her rule. Alas, the will of Heaven had decreed otherwise! Instead of adding glory to her reign, the defeat of the Chinese forces will ever remain a dark stain on the history of the Manchu dynasty. The Empress-Dowager never recovered from the blow. She lost her faith in Li Hung Chang, and mistrusted herself. Sorrows and troubles came in rapid succession, and before she had realised her exact position in the conflicts gathering around her, the armies of the greatest nations of the world were marching on her capital. The fate of Yehonala reminds us of a few lines in the "King's Tragedy," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who sings with melancholy sweetness the cruel fate of royal lovers,—

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* *Vide ante*, p. 104.

The Character of Tzu Hsi

"But the bird may fall from the bough of youth
And song be turned to moan,
And love's storm-cloud be shadow of hate
When tempests of a troubled state
Are beating against a throne."

Do not these beautiful lines recall to the memory the expectations of the young Yehonala in the embraces of her youthful husband; and do they not remind us of the hate which has impelled the Empress-Dowager to her ruin?

She watched the rising of the Boxer whirlwind, and she heard the refrain of the wild *Dies Iræ* of the religious fanatics whose zeal she had encouraged, and in the din of destruction and the blaze of conflagration she perhaps comforted herself with the cry of "*Voca me cum benedictis.*" But her doom is at hand; and no saviour will come to her rescue. She is fortunate indeed that with all the vices and crimes of Julia Agrippina she has so far escaped the fate which overtook that wicked empress. However, her day of reckoning has arrived. She has taken to flight to escape capture by the Allies, but she will henceforth cease to be a terror and power in China, and even if spared to eke out the rest of her natural life, will remain only the shadow of a great name!

CHAPTER IX

THE ARCH-EUNUCH LI LIEN YING

BEFORE proceeding to give an account of the leaders and movers in the anti-foreign crusade, we may be permitted to describe more fully the career of the arch-eunuch Li Lien Ying, who, by reason of his extraordinary influence over Tzu Hsi, was for a long time practically the master of the Empire.

The court of Pekin is the survival of a remote and barbaric past. To find its parallel the imagination has to travel away to the palaces of Persia, the court of Byzantium, the palaces of the Caliphs, the mansions of the mediæval pontiffs of western Christianity, and the seraglios of the Indian rajahs. It was the misfortune of the Manchus that they came into possession of an empire without the means of maintaining an elaborate and settled government. Consequently the first Manchu rulers had to submit to the teaching of Chinese politicians, with the result that their descendants are to-day more Chinese than Manchus in every way. If the children of Nurhachu (the reputed founder of the Tsing dynasty) entered into the mysteries of the Chinese ceremonials, with all their attendant pomp and splendour, they inherited also the degrading vices and corrupting influences which brought the once powerful Mings to their feet. The irony of fate has now placed the haughty and dissolute Manchus in the same predicament in which their valiant ancestors found the last representatives of the Mings. The Empire fell into the hands of the Manchus chiefly through the disaster caused by a rebel named Li, and now the demoralisation of the Manchu Court has been brought about by a man of the same surname! The same causes which robbed the Imperial Court of the Mings of all its sublime dignity and good name have also been at work to destroy the House of Tsing.

That history repeats itself is a truism which finds an extraordinary confirmation in the records of decaying dynasties, especially in reference to that class of court attendants who have been mutilated in accordance with the requirements of oriental fancy and jealousy. Originally they were employed as attendants of the bed-chamber of rulers in ancient Egypt, Babylonia, and Persia, and consequent on the spread of the luxurious and extravagant modes of life in these ancient and far-famed countries, the practice of employing these deformed chamberlains infected the palaces of the Byzantine emperors and of the grandees of Europe, and became the custom of the courts of India and China. The ancient Jews were acquainted with such mutilated men, but true to the genius of their race and ever watchful to keep up the old Hebrew stock in purity and vigour, they pronounced such men to be unclean, and forbade them from entering into "the congregation of the Lord."* But widely different were the views of those sons of Israel of a later age, who were influenced by the effeminate doctrines of the Essenes and biassed by the eclectic tendency of the Neo-Platonists.† And so, in the west, eunuchism and celibacy passed from the courts of pagan rulers to the cells and monasteries of Christian saints.

In ancient China the practice was unknown. Neither Confucius nor Mencius has ever alluded to it, and history does not record the extravagant doings of these palace chamberlains prior to the death of Mencius (B.C. 289).

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* Deuteronomy xxiii. 1.

† Matthew xix. 12, and 1 Corinthians vii.

However, during the first dynasty (206 B.C.–25 A.D.),* after the fall of the transitional Empire of T'sin, the eunuchs suddenly emerged into prominence. Since then, throughout the two thousand years of Chinese history, their intrigues and treason have inflicted untold misery on the toil-driven millions, and have brought one dynasty after another to its end. Scorned by the generality of mankind, these victims of a cruel and pernicious custom appear to have been driven by circumstances more than by an innate vicious temperament to usurp the power and influence of emperors, which the blindness and fatuity of successive ages placed within their reach. As they came to view on the historical horizon during the Han dynasty, so they reached the climax of their power and arrogance in the last years of the Mings. In the reign of the penultimate emperor of the latter, the eunuch Wei Chung Hsien not only ruled the Empire in the name of his weak master, but also succeeded in getting the Emperor to deify him, and to erect temples for the worship of his effigies. The Emperor died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, whose first act was to execute Wei and his paramour, K'o Shih, wet-nurse to the late Emperor and a member of the harem of his deceased father. But the evils brought upon the country could not be remedied. Insurrection against the tyranny and oppression with which the eunuchs had saddled the provinces broke out everywhere and threatened Pekin. The last Ming Emperor,* the Louis XVI. of China, was in despair; and rather than fall into the hands of infuriated robbers, he assumed the yellow Imperial robes and "ascended on high" by hanging himself on Mi Hill, in the Imperial Gardens of Pekin.

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* The Han dynasty. *Vide* note on p. 66.

The rebels under Li Tzu Ch'eng plundered the capital, and then marched against Wu San Kuei, the Chinese General, near the Great Wall. Wu submitted to the Manchus, and with their aid led out his troops against Li. The charge of Manchurian cavalry completely disorganised Li's hitherto victorious army, and the Manchus with their Chinese allies captured Pekin. Though the Manchus adopted the methods and the etiquette of the Chinese Court, they were intelligent enough to recognise the evils which had been caused by eunuchs. The first step they took in taking over the palaces was to restrict the influence as well as the opportunities of these court attendants. Had they abolished the employment of these wretched men altogether, they might have averted the great calamities which have now befallen their descendants. The eunuchs were prohibited from holding public offices, and were debarred from the use of honorary titles above the fourth degree. Moreover, on no condition were any of them to leave the metropolis. Owing to these strict but salutary laws the unhappy chamberlains remained quiet in the obscurity of the Imperial palaces during more than two hundred years. In contrast to the disgraceful scenes and the fearful tragedies so common in previous dynasties, the court of the Manchus had, until the reign of Yehonala, remained wonderfully free from the machinations of eunuchs. But, as we have already indicated, the liberty accorded by the Empress-Dowager to her favourite chamberlains Ta Ann and Hsiao Ann was the beginning of a course of events which could only end in dire disaster. The encouragement of the Empress-Dowager revived the dormant energy of the army of chamberlains, and in less than a quarter of a century the Court of Pekin has reverted to the condition it was in under the Mings—a state of abandoned licence and unbridled profligacy under the dominating and evil influence of eunuchs. The contemporary history of China cannot be properly understood without due recognition of this all-important factor behind the *purdah* of Her Imperial Majesty Tzu Hsi. Certainly the vagaries of the Pekin Government, in the last fifteen years especially, are inextricably bound up with the schemes of the Empress-Dowager; while these latter are inseparable from the intrigues of the arch-eunuch Li Lien Ying.

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* Tsung Ching, 1628–1644 A.D.

Like the profligate Wei Chung Hsien of the Ming dynasty, Li Lien Ying was a native of the metropolitan province, but, unlike him, he was a page in the seraglio of the Emperor Hsien-Feng while yet an innocent youth. Nearly half a century ago he was born in Chihli of very poor and humble parents. But he had an intelligent look and a pretty face; besides, he was a smart little boy. These qualities, and no doubt the importunity of his beggarly parents, decided his fate. Destined to be unmanned as a slave and outcast, he was bought, and brought up as a page in the Imperial palace. But, somehow or other, he evaded the customary barbarity, and grew up to be the favourite chamberlain of Yehonala, then the chief of her slaves, and finally the virtual ruler of the Manchu Empire.

Li Lien Ying understood Yehonala as perhaps no other mortal did. He had studied every detail of her features, for he could interpret the meaning of every wrinkle and the purport of every frown! He, too, had charms. A blooming youth, with all the health and the blood of the peasantry, possessed a freshness and a fascination which the jaded, overfed, sedentary, worn-out, sickly son of a Manchu Emperor so markedly lacked. Li Lien Ying became the idol of the seraglio; and after the death of the Empress Tzu Ann, Hsien-Feng's principal widow, he was selected by Yehonala as the Primus of the chamberlains and *ex-officio* keeper of the sleeping apartments of the Empress-Dowager. His influence over his mistress became supreme. As no one could approach the Empress's apartments without his consent, he was thus able to keep off undesirable persons, who might possibly poison the ears of Yehonala against himself. In spite of the statutes of the dynasty, the Empress-Dowager raised her favourite to the second rank of honorary officials. She made him not only chamberlain in charge of her toilet and her personal requirements, but also minister of finance for the palace. So necessary to the happiness of Yehonala did Li succeed in making himself, that it was the talk of the Pekinese that without Li Lien Ying there would be no smiles in the Western Palace. Li made good use of his opportunities, for he became the virtual lord of the palace. The indulgent Empress-Dowager entrusted everything to Li; never was a person punished or dismissed, degraded or beheaded, within the Forbidden City without the approval of Li Lien Ying. Need one wonder that he was feared by the thousands of palace inmates, and that he made as many enemies as friends? It must be confessed that the Empress-Dowager was exceedingly wise in trusting her money to Li. He was not a man who would hide his talents. Knowing the avarice of his mistress, he invested her wealth in pawnshops, in loans to respectable Pekin merchants and to agriculturists of old standing. Large profits were reaped in this way, and Li became the patron of metropolitan merchants and of farmers in the vicinity.

Passing from the charge of women and toilet requisites, Li Lien Ying essayed all at once the more hazardous rôle of a Macchiavelli, and he succeeded beyond his expectations.

Crowds of petty Manchu officials swarmed around him, and all managed to get something out of this voracious upstart. Kang-Yi was foremost among those who took advantage of the new facilities for promotion afforded by Li. The Manchus were soon followed by Chinese, and the ill-fame of Li Lien Ying spread far and wide. Thus Li was hated and yet courted by all the aspirants to office in the seething mandarin world of Pekin. Honest men fortunately were not altogether unrepresented in the metropolis. There was the rash but patriotic Wang Hsien Chien, Libationer of the Imperial Academy of Learning. His learned soul could find no rest until the disastrous prostitution of Imperial favours was at least recorded in the annals of the Empire. Accordingly, in the fourteenth year of Kuang Hsu, this academician sent up a memorial, in which clenching evidence was furnished of the guilt of Li Lien Ying in the sale of titles and offices. But the crafty Li became aware of the memorial even before it was handed over to the Government. Suspecting its character and purport, Li played a perfidious trick upon a fellow-chamberlain named Chang, who had been engaged by him as messenger, and who had acted as his go-between in many black transactions. Li Lien Ying went over to Chang's apartments, and there told him that both he and Chang had been impeached. "If you confess everything," said Li, "I will ask the Empress-Dowager to forgive you. If you deny all knowledge of this affair, I will surely die, and you too will fare no better." The wretched Chang knew it was useless to gainsay the head chamberlain. It would be death any way, if death was coming at all; but there was some hope if Li Lien Ying would just open his mouth when his own safety was assured. Chang readily assented, and all incriminating letters and documents were at once removed to his quarters. The memorial was duly presented to the Empress-Dowager, who at that time had not yet lost her head, though she had forgotten her high position. The proper authorities were requested to investigate the matter while she ordered Li Lien Ying before her.

The chief chamberlain appeared with all the air of injured innocence, and, with crocodile tears, bemoaned his fate. "Your Sacred Majesty!" muttered the prostrate and weeping Li, "believe not the idle tales of jealous courtiers! Legions combine to destroy me because I serve you as a slave, because you find satisfaction in me, and I never cease to do your Majesty's will. The truth is, my name is frequently forged by chamberlains in order to bring injury upon myself; but, as hitherto, such forgery has only done harm to my own person. I have abstained from troubling you with my private affairs, but in this case the safety of the State is endangered, and I beseech your Majesty to search the apartments of the eunuchs for letters which may serve to bring the culprits to justice. As for me, I know nothing but the pleasure of your Majesty, and have not done anything to merit suspicion." The search was made. Numerous letters addressed to Li Lien Ying were found in Chang's apartments, the silly chamberlain confessed as he was directed, and was instantly executed. Yehonala became more attached to Li Lien Ying, and the friendship henceforth deepened, until all disguises were thrown off. Wang, the academician, was disgusted with the result of his activity, and took his departure for his native city in Hunan, where he has ever since lived in retirement.

The needs of the Empire absorbed not a little of the income of the huge territory over which the Empress-Dowager ruled; but her pleasures and her palaces could not be maintained on nothing. If money could not come the usual way, come it must some other way. Li Lien Ying it was who gradually corrupted the morals of the Empress-Dowager, so that she, in time, felt no compunction in sharing with him the proceeds of offices sold to the highest bidder, whatever his qualifications or antecedents. The worse these were the higher was the price to be paid. One man paid 70,000 taels[*] for the Shanghai taotaiship; a Manchu gave 130,000 taels for the position of third-class official in the Imperial Household. Another obtained release from prison and reinstatement for 100,000 taels,[†] and the friends and subordinates of the veteran Liu Kun-Yi are alleged to have sent Li Lien Ying something like 130,000 taels,[‡] in order to prevent the old viceroy from being dismissed by the enemies of reform. No promotion could take place without money. Every change of officials, from the highest to the lowest, brought something to the coffers of Li and Yehonala. Prince Ching and Shun Yu Wen joined Li Lien Ying in carrying on this gigantic transaction, which required no capital and yielded certain profits.

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[*] Nearly £10,000 sterling.

[†] More than £14,000 sterling.

[‡] Nearly £18,500 sterling.

Among Li's enemies were the progressive Chinese, and the Emperor Kuang Hsu in the midst of all. Kuang Hsu soon recognised that the wretch Li Lien Ying had really more power than himself. To his tutor Weng Tung Ho he casually remarked on one occasion: "I, the Emperor, am only a secretary! While Li Lien Ying gives orders, I humbly obey!" The enmity between the Emperor and his aunt was largely due to the instigation of Li Lien Ying. All the troubles of the period of the *coup d'état* of 1898 are traceable to the same source. Indirectly, therefore, Li was the cause of the Emperor's deposition, for he swore vengeance when he was ordered to be beaten by Kuang Hsu in 1894.* He encouraged the Empress-Dowager to spend all the millions on the palaces. He flattered her in every way, and catered for all her pleasures. The latest fashions of Shanghai—dresses fancied by the courtesans of the Paris of the Far East—found their way into the palaces, ordered by the profligate Li, though Manchu ladies dress differently from Chinese. But Li's object was to stimulate the flagging nerves of the inmates of the palaces. Amateur acting was also introduced by him. How charming for an Empress to act the slave and a chamberlain the slave's lover! "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." Shades of Shakespeare! What acting! What scenes!

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* *Vide ante*, p. 117.

That the Emperor Kuang Hsu detested this arch-intriguer need cause us no surprise; but he was powerless to remove him so long as Yehonala was Empress-Dowager. The secret hatred soon developed into a life-and-death struggle between the Emperor and the chief chamberlain, who had become the patron of Yung-lu, Kang-Yi, and Prince Ching. Even the aged Prince Kung had to show marked and servile deference to this slave. Kuang Hsu's imprisonment and deposition were carried out by the orders of Li Lien Ying, through the medium of the Empress-Dowager. Li's power became supreme, but Yung-lu was not going to be a mere parasite for all time. He wanted Li as a ladder, and now that Kuang Hsu had been got out of the way he would assert his influence, which, thanks to Li Lien Ying, he was able to wield. Naturally he discovered that his ex-patron was insolent and arrogant. Very soon after there was an open rupture between Yung-lu and Li Lien Ying. Not long after that Her Imperial Majesty frowned furiously on her audacious nephew. Changes of vast importance were occurring in Pekin; the creatures of Li Lien Ying had all emerged from the chrysalis stage, and provided with terrible power, they were defying one another and their patron and patroness. The unsuccessful *coup d'état* of January, 1900, had set each conspirator a-thinking of some new diabolical plot against one another and against the State. The Empress-Dowager, thrown on the horns of a dilemma, was seeking some manly advice when the faithful attendant of the bed-chamber was seized with agonising spasms and died. Pekin rang with delight in many quarters, but not everywhere. "Li Lien Ying was poisoned," unconsciously fell out from everyone's lips.*

Li Lien Ying was virtual master of the Empire during a period of twenty years (1881–1900), and he left behind him at his death a fortune of £5,000,000 sterling. The fact that a man like Kang-Yi used to call him Li Ta Shu, elder uncle Li, is a sufficient proof of the high honour in which he was held. He had all the avarice, the greed, and the vices of the famous Narses, but lacked the genius and ability of that Byzantine eunuch general, who successively defeated the Goths and the Franks. But he made up for his ignorance and perversity by subtlety of intrigue, mock humility, business acumen, and ready wit. Without any education, he learned all that he knew from the theatres, which he delighted to see. People say that his predilection in this matter was the occasion of the continuous performance of plays within the palace. Li's death was a great blessing, but the history of former reigns warns us that the chamberlains never sin singly. The sooner the palaces are rid of these wretched slaves, and of the men who simulate them, the better for the Chinese Empire. The first step of the new Emperor of the new régime should be to abolish eunuchism from all the palaces.

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* *Vide ante*, p. 99.

NOTE.—Li appears to be still alive, in spite of the above circumstantial account of his death, and the supposed manner of it. Not only diplomatists, but those also who try to follow intelligently the course of events in China, are often at fault by the continual dying and rising again of some of the principal characters. To screen one of their number, the officials will give out that he has committed suicide, or has died of disease, while he is merely lying low till the personal danger is past. Li had good reasons for keeping in the background a while. He is believed to be at present in Si-ngan-fu, or its neighbourhood.—ED.

CHAPTER X

KANG-YI

IT is well that the British public should have some information about the character and antecedents of the Manchu parvenu Kang-Yi, the extortioner, the avowed enemy of reformers and foreigners, the prime instigator of the anti-foreign crusade. The history of Chinese misgovernment since the *coup d'état* of 1898 is largely the record of the deeds and machinations of this man. His career has been a brilliant one, judged by the rapid promotion he has received ; but an intimate knowledge of the man, of his intellectual and moral capacity, will satisfy anyone that his rapid elevation in the official world since 1896 has been due to other causes than merit or ability.

Kang-Yi commenced life as a Manchu interpreter and clerk. Though he can speak Chinese, of course, yet up to the present he does not read or write the Chinese characters to any extent. His ignorance of the Chinese written language shuts out from him all the available knowledge of the outside world, which any progressive Chinese may acquire himself through the numerous works already existing, thanks chiefly to the labours of missionaries. To understand the man's inveterate hatred of all who are in any way connected with the West, and to form a true estimate of his character, it is essential to bear in mind that Kang-Yi is quite an uncultured and superstitious person.

There is no doubt that Kang-Yi has repeatedly shown, through his acts, his utter ignorance of the higher thoughts of the Chinese. Anyone conversant with Chinese literature can see, through what he has repeatedly done, that he has not sufficient knowledge, not only of the classics, but also of the time-honoured institutions of the country. His anti-reform and anti-foreign sentiments are well illustrated by incidents such as the following. During the war with Japan he actually asked the admiral of the Canton fleet to sail to the north with forty wooden junks to expel the Japanese. About the same period he visited the temple of Neptune, that is, the shrine of the Dragon-King, the lord of the sea, *kowtowing* to the idol, and praying that a storm might be raised to overwhelm the Japanese fleet. When he was Governor of Canton he completely wrecked the naval college scheme, patriotically carried out by Liu Kun-Yi, the present viceroy of Nankin, and Chang Chi Tung, viceroy of Mid-China, at the cost of over a million dollars. He closed the college in Whampoa, and ordered twenty-nine gunboats and nineteen torpedo-boats to be docked and all hands dismissed, thus allowing these fine vessels to become utterly ruined through sheer neglect. Out of pure hatred of foreigners he would see all works of theirs rot before he was satisfied. When Weng Tung Ho was urging upon the Emperor the need of reform, Kang-Yi incited Prince Kung and other Manchus to oppose him, and though Weng had the Emperor's countenance, as we have seen, he was unable to cope with the Manchu opposition. In 1899 Kang-Yi visited the Yang-tze region as Lord High Commissioner, and there he interdicted all the schools for foreign learning, and stigmatised all reformers, Christians, and friends of foreigners as traitors. He repeatedly brought before the Imperial Cabinet a proposal to abolish the secretary for foreign affairs maintained by the viceroys, and to dissolve the Tsungli Yamen, so that the foreign representatives would have no one to whom to make their communications! On his return to Pekin he visited Shanghai with a large body of troops, against the municipal regulations, and behaved in a most arrogant manner. He closed his nostrils with his fingers, and told his attendants that he could not stand the sour odour of the *Yang kuei tzu*, or little foreign devils (literally "foreign devil-kids"). Not long ago, about the beginning of the anti-foreign troubles, an Imperial edict appeared, prohibiting the use of the Chinese characters representing the names of England, Japan, Germany, France, and Russia; and the Chinese assert that Kang-Yi was the instigator, if not the author, of that decree by the Dowager-Empress.

The above-quoted instances are only a few taken at random from among the public acts of this Manchu savage. Like all Manchus, he is not without courage, but he is reckless to a degree. From the very beginning of his career he has shown himself the implacable enemy both of Chinese and foreigners. That a man without a proper knowledge of the Chinese language and with such a record of ridiculous deeds should have been able to hold one of the highest offices as a Cabinet Minister is a sufficient indication of the utter rottenness of the so-called Chinese Government.

Kang-Yi was, as we have already stated, an obscure clerk employed in Manchu correspondence. The next step for him was official writer in Manchu; and after this he became senior Secretary of the Board of Revenue. He left this metropolitan post to take up the taotaiship of Weichow, Chow-chow (of which Swatow is the port), and Kayinchow (Hakkaland). We hear of him next as judge of Kwangtung, and from this post of great responsibility, with abundant opportunity for "squeeze," he soon worked his way to the lieutenant-governorship of Canton. He virtually became the treasurer of this rich city. Nothing now became too great or too high for him, and accordingly we find him successively Governor of the Shansi and of the Kiangsu province. Everyone knows that he obtained these high posts through the influence of Li Lien Ying, and therefore it is unnecessary to dilate on the means whereby he managed to obtain the welcome services of this wretched eunuch. A public gift made by Kang-Yi to his patron is recorded, and is well known to all students of Chinese affairs. When the Japan war began, Kang-Yi had the satisfaction of realising his ambition of becoming the Governor of Canton. To show his gratitude he went to Pekin in person to congratulate the Empress-Dowager on her birthday, and made her a present of a bag containing gold coins of all the countries of the world possessing a coinage in that metal. Of each kind of coin there were a hundred pieces. He was grateful enough to send a similar gift to Li Lien Ying.

Kang-Yi had doubtless made his fortune, and all he wanted was power and influence. These he was soon to acquire, to the ruin of the Empire. A very short time after admission to audience he was gazetted a member of the Imperial Cabinet, and he at once took his seat among the highest nobles and princes, and in the midst of the highest Chinese ministers. Henceforth he became the staunch friend of the Empress-Dowager, and in season and out of season he agitated among the Manchus a crusade against those Chinese who look favourably on the achievements of western learning, for even in China science has been making progress.

Kang-Yi's crusade against innovation took at its commencement a patriotic form. The danger of the Chinese becoming too powerful through their knowledge of western sciences was pressed home on the mind of the uncultured Manchus. At all costs the progress of the Chinese must be stayed, but that could only be a palliative measure. The Chinese must be incited to hate foreigners, for only when anti-foreign feeling is strong can the suicidal policy of shutting out western learning have the remotest chance of success. Kang-Yi was astute enough to see all this. An early result of his agitation was a strong anti-Chinese movement among the Manchus. The temporary influence enjoyed by Kang Yu Wei, and the sweeping reforms which the Emperor sanctioned, alarmed the Manchus, who saw in Kang-Yi their prophet and saviour. Did he not warn them against Chinese and foreigners? Are not all the reformers Chinese, and have they not converted even a Manchu Emperor? Then what are their schemes? Foreign schools, foreign armaments, abolition of bows and arrows, abolition of torture, reform of civil and criminal law, an Imperial parliament, promulgation of a constitution, opening of the whole Empire to foreign intercourse, and the employment of a large body of foreign teachers, form the chief items of the glorious edicts of 1898, issued by the Emperor Kuang

Hsu. Do not these betray the working of foreign Powers who utilised traitors like Kang and his colleagues to subvert the Manchu cause solely by the power of the pen?

"The pen is mightier than the sword!" Is not this a favourite maxim both of Chinese and foreigners? These are some of the anxious questions which presented themselves to the Manchus. They vacillated and hesitated, but day by day became more and more alarmed, especially at the unusual enthusiasm of the Chinese. Then came the edict abolishing sinecures held by Manchus for honours won by their remote ancestors at the time of the conquest. The Manchus could not delay any longer. They rallied round Kang-Yi as the leader and saviour of the nation, and in a few days the Empress-Dowager joined the Manchu faction, and the *coup d'état* of 1898 became an accomplished fact. Kuang Hsu was virtually deposed, and reformers had to fly for their lives. Six were executed in Pekin, attended by Kang-Yi as commissioner, although they were not tried, and had committed no crime.

He was in the very vortex of the anti-foreign troops that in June, 1900, gathered in the neighbourhood of Pekin. He and

Prince Tuan were most vehement in maintaining extreme anti-foreign views. We may be sure that he and Yung-lu, the Generalissimo of the Manchu forces, must have been in collusion all the time. Granted that some of the troops mutinied and got out of control, the fact remains that Yung-lu, at the head of over 50,000 well-armed soldiers, did worse than nothing, for he evidently connived at his soldiers joining the Boxers. Yet we have heard that Yung-lu had often urged moderation. It may be that Kang-Yi succeeded in moving the soldiers to join Prince Tuan. Kang-Yi was the prime mover of the anti-foreign crusade up to the time when the conflict with the armies of Allies shut out Pekin from the rest of the world.

Note.—Kang-Yi was reported to have committed suicide in October last, and from the fact that the Powers were understood to be pressing for his posthumous degradation, it may be inferred that he really *is* dead. (See note on p. 158.)—**Ed.**

CHAPTER XI

YUNG-LU, THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

YUNG-LU, the haughty Manchu Generalissimo, who is primarily responsible for all the bloodshed in and about Pekin, is descended from a distinguised family, very well connected, indirectly, with the nobility, and even with the Imperial clansmen. In fact, Yung-lu himself is a distant nephew of the Empress-Dowager. Apart from his connection with Tzu Hsi, Yung-lu began life as a first-class honorary licentiate, or *yin shen*, an honour conferred on him in recognition of services to the dynasty rendered by his ancestors. With this much-coveted distinction as a stepping-stone to office, and with no lack of influence behind him, Yung-lu was able to forego the drudgery of the usual examinations, and, like most Manchus of influence, was gazetted to important posts without a proper scholastic preparation. The career of Yung-lu presents itself for study in three well-defined periods.

The first epoch in the life of Yung-lu extends from his entrance into the public service down to his degradation by the Eastern Empress Tzu Ann. He started his career straight away as a senior secretary of one of the Boards. At the early age of thirty he received an appointment as senior vice-president of one of the six Boards* which constitute the Central Administrative Bureau of the Chinese Empire. While holding this post he used every means in his power to ingratiate himself with the palace eunuchs, and endeavoured by their intrigues to advance his position. His secret machinations were, however, discovered and exposed by Shen Kwei Fen, a Cabinet Minister of known independence and integrity. In revenge Yung-lu incited the Dowager-Empress to have Shen degraded and dismissed from office. Yung-lu expected by this at once to punish his opponent, and to get for himself the Cabinet appointment vacated by Shen. His hopes were not realised, and he was destined to wait many long years before he reached the goal of his ambition; and then only after strenuous efforts maintained during a quarter of a century. Fortunately for Shen, Weng Tung Ho was found on his side, and through the friendly services of Weng, Shen's case was brought to the notice of the Eastern Empress Tzu Ann. She had long been waiting for an opportunity to reassert her authority, which was being gradually usurped by the more able and more astute Western Empress. She was therefore only too willing to punish a *protégé* and relative of her rival. Accordingly she degraded Yung-lu from his high metropolitan office, and sent him back to the army with the rank of colonel.

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* *Vide* note on p. 60.

The second period is a long lull of twenty years in the career of this adventurer. For ten years he remained in the army in comparative obscurity, but allowing nothing to hinder him from gaining military knowledge, or making the best of his opportunities. In these years he returned to the boxing and pugilistic exercises which had been his favourite pastime in his youth. Though he was a high officer, he would keep the company of all the rough and low characters, who would join him in these violent athletic tussles, which the typical Chinese gentry so much eschew. Though

Yung-lu seemed to the ordinary Chinese official to have abandoned himself to his fate, yet in truth he was quietly bringing his cause under the charge of one of the most influential princes. By means of presents and various attentions he secured the protection of no less a person than Prince Suen, the father of the youthful Emperor. On the recommendation of the Prince, Yung-lu received his promotion to the commandantship of the Foochow army, after having been ten years without a command.

Five years later he was transferred to Shansi, as general officer commanding the troops. These two military commands occupied ten years, but Yung-lu was not satisfied with any provincial appointment, however high. In his case not only was the pay inadequate, but the opportunities for "squeezing" were extremely limited. However, he was now in a position to work his way up, and he left no stone unturned to get himself back to Pekin.

We now pass on to the third and most eventful, and, let us hope also, the last period in the career of Yung-lu. While the war with Japan was progressing he succeeded in gaining the favour of the notorious Li Lien Ying. What this cost him no one knows, but it was apparent that, soon after he became a *protégé* of Li's, he was recalled to Pekin and installed in the capital as Commandant-General of the Police, at the head of about 6,000 soldiers. Yung-lu being a stalwart and daring man, was much feared, as he was equal in fighting powers to nine or ten ordinary Chinese. As in the provinces, so now in the capital, he collected around him all the wildest characters in Pekin. One would find in his *yamen* the low comedians so common in the north, the bandit chiefs, and the heads of the robber gangs who infested the vicinity of Pekin. Yung-lu knew that his real interests lay in keeping strict watch over the thieves of Pekin; and by befriending their chiefs he was able to keep good order in the metropolis. While he honestly worked to keep down burglary and robbery, he did not forget the value of Li Lien Ying's services. Through Li his work in the police was brought to the Empress-Dowager's notice, and Yung-lu had the satisfaction to see his efforts recognised. The aunt was doubtless pleased—in fact, was waiting for an opportunity—to restore her relative to power. Yung-lu was raised to the presidentship of the Board of War, with the high honorary title of Assistant Grand Secretary of State.

Before the war in 1894 Yung-lu had often boasted that he could defeat the Japanese force. But in spite of his extravagant declarations, and though he was the head of the War Department, and was Special Commissioner in charge of the conduct of the war, the Chinese soldiers were beaten everywhere, and so old Li Hung Chang had to be sent to sue for peace, even in Japan. When order was restored, Yung-lu was transferred to the Tsungli Yamen, and then was the door of unlimited peculation open to him. His power naturally increased, and thousands of ambitious young officials sought his patronage. These young men euphemistically styled themselves "pupils," and their patron "master." This custom is an old one, and Yung-lu only availed himself of an old-established way of "squeezing." These pupils pay their masters regularly large sums of money and expect in return promotion of some kind. Yung-lu worked Li Lien Ying so successfully that his pupils increased greatly in number. In this way he was steadily not only enriching himself, but also increasing his adherents. So refined has become the art of "squeezing" in the mystic land of China!

Soon after his accession to the Tsungli Yamen, Weng Tung Ho, supported by Chang Yin Huan and Liao Heng,* members of that

* *Vide* Appendix, § III.

body, brought forward proposals for reforming the defects of the Government. Yung-lu combined with Kang-Yi to get the co-operation of Prince Kung, and the Chinese party of progress could do practically nothing. Kang Yu Wei was then in Pekin lecturing on reforms, and the Emperor, moved by his old tutor Weng, ordered the Tsungli Yamen to consider Wen Tung Ho's scheme and to report thereon, as has been already narrated. The discussion in the Yamen resulted in a defeat of the Chinese party, as Prince Ching, backed by Yung-lu, won the day. But the progressive Weng continued his efforts, and in 1898 resuscitated the question of reforms. This time Kang Yu Wei was destined to play the active rôle, as Weng soon incurred the hostility of the Empress-Dowager, and was practically dismissed. Kang-Yi and Yung-lu from the very start determined to upset the schemes of Kang Yu Wei and his reforming colleagues. They set about misrepresenting the cause of reform to the Manchu princes and nobles, and, through the medium of Prince Ching and Li Lien Ying, won over the Empress-Dowager. Yung-lu openly disobeyed the Imperial commands, and, entering into a secret arrangement with Li Lien Ying, who had entertained the bitterest hatred against Kuang Hsu, since he had caused him to be bastinadoed for insolent conduct,* plotted the destruction of the Emperor.

Yung-lu was clever enough to see that if Kuang Hsu remained in power his chance of advancement was gone. So he procured his own removal from Pekin to the viceroyalty of Chih-li, a post of great value and influence, as it implies also command of the five great military divisions around the capital. He thus became the head of 50,000 soldiers. Although a strong conservative, he had sufficient intelligence to recognise that European armaments were superior in every way to the effete native weapons. In this respect he contrasts very favourably with the windbag agitator Kang-Yi. Consequently he provided his men with the best arms he could procure; and he used to boast that his troops were well armed and efficiently drilled. He certainly took great pains to make his men efficient, and he did this with an object in view.

Yung-lu had the sagacity to cultivate the friendship of the generals under his command, so that he soon became very popular among them. He would humour their idiosyncrasies, and would go out of his way to show his interest in their welfare. He was most assiduous in paying attentions to the most able leaders, especially to Yuan Shi-kai; to Tung Fu-hsiang, who led the Chinese troops against the Legations; to Sung Ching, who fought the Japanese in Liaotung; and to Nieh Su Chin, whose soldiers fought the Allies in Tientsin. Having thus gained the confidence of his generals, he proposed to his Imperial aunt the holding of a great military and naval review in Tientsin and off Taku, and he suggested the propriety of the Dowager-Empress and the Emperor attending in person to witness the military movements. Secretly he despatched to Li Lien Ying a memorandum of an infernal plot to assassinate the Emperor. This was discovered by Weng Tung Ho, through the good services of some faithful eunuchs, and the Emperor was duly warned. Poor Weng was now a marked man, and was openly abused by Yung-lu in the most vulgar language. In a few days Weng, as already stated, was degraded, and was ordered to return to his native place, and henceforth all high officials were commanded to communicate solely and directly with the Empress-Dowager.

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* *Vide ante*, pp. 117, 155.

Meanwhile the one hundred days* of wonder in Pekin—for the Emperor Kuang Hsu and Kang Yu Wei worked together exactly a hundred days—were rapidly rolling on. As if intoxicated by the wine of the new learning, Kuang Hsu sanctioned edict after edict to bring about the most revolutionary reforms which had been considered by a Chinese Emperor. But Yung-lu defiantly disobeyed. The powerless Emperor was incensed, and called together the Cabinet, and commanded them to censure Yung-lu for disobeying Imperial edicts. In the meantime Kuang Hsu showed a bit of his temper by rigorously persevering with his reform work and by dismissing from office six high mandarins from the Board of Ceremonies.

This exhibition of energy was fatal to Kuang Hsu himself, for it frightened the Conservatives who, under the guidance of Prince Ching and Kang-Yi, held a conclave, and sent emissaries to confer with Yung-lu. About the same time the advisers of the Emperor said that the use of force might eventually be necessary, at least to protect the Emperor, and consequently Yuan Shi-kai, then holding the command of the Tientsin division, was ordered to appear before the Emperor. Yuan Shi-kai's views had been previously sounded, and as he showed that he was both progressive and friendly to reformers, the Emperor resolved to fall back upon him in the hour of need. With the true instinct of a military genius, Yung-lu, on hearing that Yuan Shi-kai had been summoned before the Emperor, at once grasped the whole situation, and without a moment's delay and without waiting for any authority, even from his aunt, he ordered Tung Fu-hsiang to proceed to Pekin at once with a large body of troops. At the same time he despatched General Nieh to march on Tientsin in order to intercept any attempt by Yuan Shi-kai to move his soldiers in the direction of Pekin in order to support the Emperor. These precautions were certainly justified, and showed that Yung-lu knew something of military disposition; but they were unnecessary, as Yuan Shi-kai turned traitor.

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* *Vide ante*, p. 58.

Having thus made his preparations, Yung-lu hastened to Pekin by railway, and arrived *incognito* on the sixth day of the eighth Chinese moon, in the twenty-fourth year of Kuang Hsu (1898). On the same day the palace revolution was accomplished. Yuan Shi-kai sided with Yung-lu, and Kuang Hsu was practically deposed.

Could anyone reasonably doubt that the *coup d'état* was due mainly to the influence of Yung-lu? In any case Yung-lu was immediately raised to a seat in the Cabinet, and was succeeded by Yu-lu, who remained in Chih-li until the bombardment of Tientsin by the Allies in June, 1900. The party of Yung-lu completely overturned the labours of Kang Yu Wei, and did their utmost to exterminate the reformers.

The military preparations of Yung-lu have already been referred to, and an incident soon happened to gratify his pride. It will be remembered that in the spring of 1899 the Italians meditated the acquisition of Sanmun Bay. Yung-lu strenuously opposed the Italian demands, and the Italian Government allowed the matter to drop. Yung-lu regarded this as a specimen of the European character. He used to say that Italy was deterred because she was afraid. He thought a new era had dawned in the history of the country. Henceforth, he concluded, the most salutary way to deal with foreign concession-mongers was to show firmness, and be ready to show fight.

After Kuang Hsu had been stripped of all power, Yung-lu, though about sixty years of age, became the virtual ruler, but he was cunning enough to retain his aunt's services, because he knew quite well that the powerful viceroys of the South would not readily submit to him. He recognised he had to face the spread of the reform movement, and partly to counteract this, and partly to strengthen his own hands, he encouraged the formation of volunteers; and practically sanctioned the organisation of the Boxers. Yung-lu, however, as usual with him, made it known publicly that he was espousing the cause of Kuang Hsu against the extreme Conservatives. Yet he was determined to make away with the Emperor; so an edict was issued, stating that Kuang Hsu had been poisoned by Kang Yu Wei. As the warrant for the execution of Kang, if arrested, had already been spread broadcast, Yung-lu, in order to make away with the Emperor, resolved to adopt a common Chinese device of doing the deed himself and of throwing the blame on someone else. The best thing to be done was to make a scapegoat of the refugee Kang Yu Wei. His assassination seemed only a matter of time. Meanwhile an edict was forged purporting that Kang had poisoned the Emperor.

The intention was doubtless to kill Kang first and then to give poor Kuang Hsu the cup of poison. But Kang Yu Wei, fortunately for himself, made good his escape, and sought asylum under the ægis of the Union Jack. The truth that the Emperor was alive leaked out, and then another edict appeared to the effect that the Emperor was ill. Meanwhile assassins* were sent after the chief reformers even in their exile in foreign lands.

Kang, however, travelled far and wide and wrote continuously, while his followers disseminated reform literature all over the world. Telegrams began to reach Pekin itself that the Chinese abroad were slowly awakening to a sense of patriotism. They dared to have a voice in affairs of state. Kuang Hsu's return to power was requested by the Chinese; and this Yung-lu knew meant his own ruin. Consequently he compelled his aunt to nominate a new Emperor, in the person of Prince Tuan's son, Pu Ch'un. Prince Tuan and Yung-lu had been fast friends, and the arrangement seemed satisfactory, as they would practically be co-regents with the Dowager-Empress. But Yung-lu miscalculated the forces which were silently growing up in the South against the reactionary government, headed by him. A vigorous stand was made against this iniquitous deposition of Kuang Hsu, and the Empress-Dowager and Yung-lu found it expedient to temporise and compromise. Kang-Yi and Yung-lu of course worked together, and the prevarications of these two men have disgusted even the Chinese officials.

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* *Vide* introductory note by the Editor of the *Singapore Free Press.*

The art of telling lies is certainly carried to almost ideal perfection amongst oriental politicians. But nothing can beat Yung-lu's prevarications and trickery. Though personally responsible for all the movements of the Government, he gave it out that Prince Ching, Kang-Yi, and Prince Tuan were the chief actors. These men surely sympathised with him, but none had the necessary power, and nothing could be done by any of them, save with the open or secret sanction of Yung-lu himself. Now Kang-Yi is only a babbler compared with him, but Yung-lu has openly declared that his moderation in urging the cause of Kuang Hsu had incensed the Dowager-Empress against him. Against this lie we have the edict which made him a palace chamberlain, with the unique distinction also of being the Captain-General of the Banner Corps.* A special post—that of Commander-in-Chief of the Empire—was created and conferred on him, thus immensely increasing his power and his influence.

We have been able to procure very important and conclusive documentary evidence of Yung-lu's complicity in the treacherous attack on the Legations at Pekin. We append a running translation of a letter from Yung-lu to his General, Tung Fu-hsiang, and from the latter to his chief. How we have got possession of the copy of the letters could not be divulged with safety to those who were instrumental in bringing them to our knowledge. We can fully assure our readers that our correspondent in Pekin who supplied us with the information was quite satisfied that the copy was made from *bonâ-fide* letters between Yung-lu and Tung Fu-hsiang:—

"FROM YUNG-LU, THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF,
TO TUNG FU-HSIANG, GENERAL.

"BROTHER,—You are a sincere patriot! The western barbarians have persecuted our people.

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* The Imperial Army, as distinguished from the National Army, or Army of the Green Standard. The Imperial Army is divided into eight corps, each having a distinctive banner of its own.—ED.

Of late years they have had the audacity to meddle even with our internal affairs, so that we are becoming almost without power. This is most provoking. Those who favour western leading fear the barbarians as if they were tigers. Now these foreign barbarians are few in number, while their countries are insignificant. They are only robbers coming over to despoil our land; they have indeed good warships and good arms, but these are the only things with which they can frighten us. . . . Now our own troops are well drilled. We have all the weapons the barbarians have. Then the patriotic volunteers, the Boxers, will join us. Their hearts are burning with the wrongs brought on them by foreign devils. Is not their coming to join us an opportune gift from heaven? I opposed the cession of Sanmun to Italy, and the latter dared not touch us. So I intend to greatly and widely display the ferocity of my soldiers, and prevent for ever the barbarians from frightening our people. The accursed race of barbarians are not numerous, and surely we can kill or expel them from our country. You are a brave general. Your soldiers are true warriors. I know you have long hoped to strike a blow against foreigners; will you help the Boxers, and select your best officers to look after them? Help them with arms and ammunition. This is a grand opportunity open to you for reaping extraordinary honours. Do not miss this chance.

"YUNG-LU."

"REPLY OF TUNG FU-HSIANG TO YUNG-LU.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I respectfully answer as follows: I have received your note informing me that the barbarians oppress our people. Certainly exterminate them, so that in future they will not molest us. Your Excellency will sacrifice your life for the country's cause. Surely you are a patriot! I, Tung Fu-hsiang, though without ability, would like to punish the barbarians for their insolence. Having received your letter, I will exert my utmost strength to punish the barbarians. I must show my wrath. All the Boxers are foaming with rage. They are patriots, they are reckless, and they don't want their lives. Soon therefore shall we sweep away the barbarians.

"Surely success is ours. This affair is the result of your Excellency's deep thought and intelligence. In obedience to your commands, I am quite prepared to act. I am awaiting the right time. I will sacrifice my life to show my thanks (for your confidence). I hope you will continue to favour me with your instructions. I will respectfully forward to you periodic reports of our troops.

"TUNG FU-HSIANG."

These letters, written in May or early in June, 1900, when the Boxers began to move into Pekin, show that whoever else may have had a share in inciting the Boxers against foreigners, Yung-lu and his General, Tung Fu-hsiang, were the most guilty, since upon them primarily devolved the duty of protecting the ambassadors of friendly nations from the assaults of a native mob. It is certain that without Yung-lu's approval no military action worth speaking of can be set agoing anywhere within a hundred miles of Pekin.

Yung-lu is not only a hater of foreigners and Chinese, but also a traitor to his own Sovereign, to his own race, and to his best friends. His policy can be seen through at once. By putting all the blame on the Boxers, Prince Tuan, and others, he hoped when the day of reckoning came, in case of his defeat, to get off lightly; while, if his forces were victorious, it would be a matter of very little consequence to himself that he had told certain lies.

If we have painted Yung-lu blacker than some imagine he really is, we have not done so on purpose, with *malice prepense.* The letters prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that Yung-lu is the real leader of the so-called Boxer rebels, and is responsible for the attack on foreigners and Christians and for the attempt to massacre the foreign representatives.

This will explain the mystery of the activity of the Chinese troops. We have endeavoured to give a short but faithful account of this notorious enemy of civilisation, and we trust our *résumé* of his treachery, misdeeds, and his lies may help the Powers to come to a decision as to what should be done with him. On our part we unhesitatingly recommend him for the gallows.

CHAPTER XII

PRINCE TUAN, THE "REBEL EMPEROR"

THE civilised world has been suddenly confronted with the personalities of an enormous number of leading Chinese and Manchus, whose very names even are strange. Among the men who have recently attracted public attention in Pekin none has gained a greater notoriety than Tsai Yi, the Prince Tuan. A scion of the Imperial house, he is a cousin of the Emperor Kuang Hsu, and claims direct descent from the founder of the dynasty through Prince Tun, the fifth son of Tao Kuang. Thus he and the Emperor are both grandsons of the Emperor Tao Kuang,* who after a long but unhappy reign bequeathed his misfortunes to his fourth son, Hsien-Feng.

Prince Tuan is therefore a man of considerable importance, and though only a little over thirty years of age, he exercises a great influence over the Imperial clansmen and the metropolitan Manchus generally. It has been alleged that he is only an adopted son of Prince Tun, but the truth of this we shall never know. At any rate, he was at first a Hereditary Prince of the Third Order, and subsequently was raised to the rank of *Tolokunwang*, or Hereditary Prince of the Second Order. He married a Manchu lady, a relative of the Empress-Dowager, and through her influence to a great extent, he has been able to win the favour of Tzu Hsi.

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* Tao Kuang, 1821-1851.

Like most Manchus, the young prince was allowed to grow up in nature's own way. That he acquired the art of riding and the use of the bow is a foregone conclusion, and as a prince he must have frequently taken part in the hunting expeditions, which have always formed an important element of the national pastimes of the Manchus. But he evidently took no pains with his studies, and grew up almost an illiterate man. Without any culture he passed his youth in the savage environment of the most conservative Manchus, namely the princes and nobles. He has inherited in a remarkable degree the deep-rooted pride and arrogance as well as the impetuosity of the founders of his house. We need not be surprised to learn that the Prince is an exceedingly superstitious man. He is a great believer in magic and witchcraft, as well as in the ordinary superstitions of the country. When he was yet a young man he used to take great interest in boxing, and to spend a great deal of his time witnessing the performances of wrestlers and jugglers. He is said to have entertained these very hospitably, and to have attracted them from all quarters. It may be that this early predilection for boxing is not without significance in determining his association with the agitation known as that of the Boxers.

It is unnecessary to emphasise the fact that the Prince Tuan led a life of debauchery, aggravated by every kind of excess. No oriental prince, however, behaves any better, and we need not credit the allegation of Prince Tuan's enemies that he is the most reprobate among the princes in Pekin.

Two events in the recent history of China have proved to be the turning points in the career of some of the greatest living Chinese and Manchus—the China-Japan War of 1894 and the *coup d'état* of 1898. Prince Tuan is one of those men whose fortune has been immediately benefited by these two disasters to the Empire. After the Peace of Shimonoseki the thoughts of the Chinese were directed towards the reorganisation of the army and navy. Prince Tuan distinguished himself by his efforts to improve the drill and armaments of some of the Manchu corps. The Empress-Dowager promptly put him in command of the Hu Hseng Army Corps of about 10,000 men. Prince Tuan took the utmost pains to select the most daring and reckless roughs of the north for his corps. He is well liked, for his men recognise his desperate earnestness and his intense devotion. Not very long ago his work in the army received the special recognition of the Empress-Dowager in an Imperial edict.

During the critical days of the *coup d'état* in 1898, Prince Tuan was entrusted with the safety of the "Sacred Precincts." He was empowered to use "the Sword of Supreme Authority" (or *Shang fang chien*), with which anyone might be killed without question or trial, and without any reference to the Empress-Dowager. No doubt the Manchus feared a rush on the palace, but the fact that this barbarous and despotic practice was revived after it had been in abeyance for a very long time recalls the events of the decadent periods of all previous dynasties. This symbol of terrible power was very much in evidence during the closing years of the Mings. The questions and watchfulness of Prince Tuan made all the Manchus, and the Empress-Dowager in particular, look to him as the one strong man in the Imperial family who might be depended upon as a leader of the troops in the event of a crisis.

Although he was a favourite of the Empress-Dowager, yet he remained for a time without having a seat either in the Tsungli Yamen or on the Grand Council. Owing to this, and to the wise rule which forbids provincial officials from meeting Imperial princes not actually holding office on one of the Boards, Prince Tuan is personally known to very few of the high and influential mandarins who govern the provinces. Had he been in the position which the late Prince Kung enjoyed, it would be difficult to say how he might have swayed the viceroys and governors of the Empire. We shall see with what results he appealed to them for reinforcements and money.

It is almost impossible to judge the true position of Yung-lu and his relation to Prince Tuan. Now he seemed to be on the side of the moderate party, and then he seemed to connive at the most atrocious excesses of the extreme reactionaries. No doubt, however, exists in the case of Kang-Yi. But whatever may be the views of Yung-lu, he undoubtedly co-operated with Kang-Yi to bring Tuan forward prominently before the Manchu and reactionary Chinese in Pekin. They both wanted someone with a big name and high-sounding titles to confer an unmistakable lustre upon the cause which they had espoused, of which the Boxer programme was only a part. In the impulsive, enthusiastic, and ambitious Prince, they discovered the necessary tool; for if he would consent to be the nominal leader of the patriotic movement all the objections and suspicions of the Imperial clansmen would be allayed, inasmuch as the rumour had already spread that Yung-lu was meditating a *coup* to establish himself on the Dragon Throne. Besides, the fact of a near relative of the Emperor being at the head would be a good advertisement for the cause, and would be sure to attract within its fold many who would otherwise have hesitated. Kang-Yi was not slow to take advantage of Prince Tuan's ignorance and impetuosity; and by fanning the Prince's ambition, soon succeeded in dragging him into all the anti-foreign schemes of the Manchu clique. A plan for the deposition of Kuang Hsu received the sanction of the Empress-Dowager, and, to secure the permanent adhesion of Prince Tuan, his son Pu Ch'un was proposed as the new Emperor. The edict of January 24th, 1900, is the official version of this traitorous design. According to its terms, Kuang Hsu, after acknowledging his sins and incapacity, abdicates, and the benevolent Empress-Dowager, on the supplication of Kuang Hsu himself, appoints Prince Tuan's son to ascend the throne on the first day of the Chinese New Year.

Prince Tuan doubtless consented to the nomination of his son; and the most important Imperial clansmen as well as all the henchmen. Yung-lu concurred also in this treasonable act against the unfortunate Kuang Hsu, whose name had been used without his consent. All the enemies of the reformers now flocked to the new standard, and thus all of a sudden the Prince Tuan was raised from a mere patriot to be the head of a most important political party. Up to this point the Prince had done nothing very outrageous, although in common with all the ignorant Conservatives he disliked foreigners, and would declare war against them. The party of which he was the head was composed of Kang-Yi, Hsü Tung (who was appointed Grand Preceptor to Prince Tuan's son, and who, in 1898, declared his intention of covering the wheels of his cart with the hide of the "barbarians"), Chao Shu Ch'iao (the well-known sympathiser of the Boxers and the envoy ordered to organise them), Prince Ching, Yung-lu, and all those others who took part in the virtual deposition of Kuang Hsu in 1898.

But an unexpected event soon happened to split up this loosely combined body into two irreconcilable factions. The Chinese *literati* were truly alarmed, when all the traditions of the land were to be upset by this edict of January, 1900. The usurpation of Prince Tuan was keenly resented, and protests of the Chinese officials increased the indignation of the Manchus, confirmed their worst fears of a new Chinese nation arising in the midst of the Empire to avenge for two and a half centuries of wrongs, and precipitated the extreme measures required for the protection of Manchu interests and the perpetual subjugation of the despised sons of Han.* Telegrams protesting against the deposition of Kuang Hsu began to reach Pekin almost immediately after news of the infamous edict had reached the provinces and the large settlements of Chinese in all parts of the world. The protests came from everywhere, and were couched in such emphatic and indignant language as the Manchus in Pekin had never been accustomed to. A most unprecedented thing had also come to pass in that abovementioned protest from *literati* who had been aroused. Under the leadership of Kin Lien Shan of Shanghai, over a thousand of them, risking their lives and official position, telegraphed to the Tsungli Yamen their strongest objections to the appointment of a new ruler. The royal viceroys, too, were not remiss, and they did all in their power to urge upon the Government the revocation of the edict.

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* *Vide* note on p. 66.

The situation was desperate. Prince Ching, Yung-lu, and the Dowager-Empress, instructed by Li Hung Chang, at once recognised that they had made a mistake. The wily old lady at once telegraphed to all her satraps, and asked them to wire back their views on the matter, and to indicate whether or not they approved of the deposition. The majority of the provincial authorities opposed the removal of Kuang Hsu on various grounds, the chief being the formidable army which the reformers could instantly raise on behalf of the now beloved Emperor. Liu Kun-Yi's lengthy reply decided the Empress-Dowager to retrace her steps, and in this policy of compromise she was supported by Yung-lu. The Prince Tuan, however, did not entertain the fears which seem to have inspired the old vixen in her entire change of front. He took to heart the opposition of the Chinese, especially the reformers, that is, the friends of the Europeans and Japanese, and he considered the yielding of Yung-lu and the Dowager-Empress as a sign of weakness in the face of this gross effrontery on the part of the subject race. Consequently he has entertained the most rancorous hatred against those Chinese who sympathised with the reforms of Kang Yu Wei. Having been dragged into the arena of politics, he had sufficient independence of character to refuse the rôle of a mere puppet, and since the claim of his son had been established and promulgated, he was naturally unwilling to retire to the background merely to ease the fears either of Yung-lu or of the Empress-Dowager.

In this state of mind he turned hopefully for succour to the chiefs of the Boxers, and he soon found an ally in the reckless general Tung Fu-hsiang. The Boxer chiefs were only too glad to be honoured by his association with them, and on his part the Prince Tuan did all in his power to procure for them recognition as patriotic volunteers by the Imperial Government. The outrages committed by the Boxers were condoned or minimised, and the most evasive or equivocal edicts were issued, ostensibly for their suppression, but in reality merely to mislead the diplomatic body. Prince Tuan believed in the magical powers of the Boxers, and he felt sure the deluded country folks were invulnerable. In April already 8,000 men under command had followed their chiefs' example, and had joined the society of "Volunteer Harmony Fists," otherwise nicknamed "Boxers."

The ascendency of Prince Tuan caused a revival of those disgraceful anti-reform edicts, calling upon the governors to extirpate the reformers and their friends. Edict after edict appeared—especially against Kang Yu Wei—in spite of the general amnesty, which was understood to be the sense of a vague proclamation issued in 1898, after the Empire had become thoroughly disgusted with the persecution.

All officials with liberal and moderate views were removed or degraded, and the Prince Tuan secured a seat in the Tsungli Yamen. It is reported that he was informed by his henchmen that foreigners did not like him, and that his appointment was not popular among the foreign representatives. Nettled by this alleged unfriendliness of some of the Foreign Ministers, he determined to commence the anti-foreign crusade (at which all the Manchus and Chinese Bannermen,* like Hsu Tung, had been working for many months) by utilising the invulnerable Boxers, and by leading them, in the first instance, against the Foreign Legations.

It must be freely admitted that Yung-lu did not approve of openly countenancing the Boxers, and that he was not inclined to treat them leniently if they were tempted to disobey the commands of officers of the regular army. From this circumstance we may understand the frequent conflicts between the Boxers and the Imperial troops. Though Yung-lu's idea of military discipline is commendable, his complicity is not any the less reprehensible, because he had the acumen not to openly identify the Government with all the doings of the Boxers. The Chinese General Nieh had certainly killed many hundred Boxers on one occasion at the commencement of the troubles, but he was promptly reprimanded. It appears that his Manchu subordinate commanders mutinied, and went over to the support of Prince Tuan and Tung Fu-hsiang. The soldiers who separated from Nieh's corps fought the Allies in and around Tientsin, and were under the chief command of Brigadier-General Sa-p'u-t'ung-a, who is a Manchu and an intimate friend of Prince Tuan. General Nieh himself was in the vicinity of Pekin endeavouring to join Yung-lu. So it really seems that Yung-lu fell out with his general Tung Fu-hsiang as to the plan of the campaign against the "barbarians." It is also significant that Yuan Shi-kai, the Governor of Shantung —notorious time-server as he is—did his best to repress the excesses of the Boxers. In fact, his troops had a brush with the soldiers who were on the side of Tung Fu-hsiang; and it is alleged that Yuan's men were victorious.

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* Chiefs of the Imperial Army. *Vide* note on p. 183.

On the 19th of June the diplomatic body in Pekin was informed that the Chinese Government considered the attack on the Tientsin forts as only the beginning of the partition of the Empire. Either on the same date, or the 24th June, the ambassadors were requested "to leave Pekin within twenty-four hours." During those two or three days Prince Tuan had doubtless brought before the Grand Council and the Tsungli Yamen (of which he had become President on June 10th) proposals for massacring all the foreign population in Pekin, including the Ministers. Now the edict of June 15th declares that the Government troops have sided with the "patriotic volunteers," and that the command of the army has been given to Prince Tuan, Kang-Yi, and Yung-lu. It is reasonable to suppose that Prince Tuan's proposal of a general massacre did not meet with the approval of the Dowager-Empress, Prince Ching, Yung-lu, and the following two Chinese, who were members of the Tsungli Yamen—Hsu Cheng Cheng and Wang Wen Ssao. Though these were Conservatives, yet they had sufficient intelligence and knowledge to recognise that the persons of ambassadors were sacred and inviolable. We need not paint the character of the old Empress darker than it really is, and we may do her the charity of believing in her innocence at least in this. She is an astute and far-seeing woman, with a very considerable amount of experience. And we may be sure she has not yet forgotten the Anglo-French capture of Pekin in 1860, when, as the youthful concubine of Hsien-Feng, she accompanied the famous Imperial flight to Jeho on the approach of the Allies. Prince Ching has been associated with foreigners for so many years that it is natural to suppose that he would not favour a wholesale murder of defenceless men, women, and children. Yung-lu had sufficient knowledge and experience to know that war with the world does not mean attack on the persons of the ambassadors. His plan was to declare war, give the ambassadors and other Europeans a stated time to leave, and then revoke all the concessions given to foreigners. It appears, however, that Prince Tuan preferred to start by making a clean sweep of all the foreigners and their Chinese sympathisers in Pekin.

The Conservatives thus became divided into two parties: the one led by Yung-lu and Prince Ching, and the other commanded by Prince Tuan, with the support of Kang-Yi and Tung Fu-hsiang. The aim of the former was to prevent Prince Tuan from carrying out his diabolical project; but Yung-lu and Prince

Ching were considerably handicapped by the defection of officers and soldiers under their command. The power of Prince Tuan became paramount; and without delay the whole machinery of government was set agoing to carry out the scheme which the Prince and Kang-Yi had elaborated with so much pains.

Prince Tuan assumed the rôle of Emperor and issued extraordinary edicts. On June 20th the viceroys were ordered by Imperial and secret edicts to expel foreigners or exterminate them, and to resist the attack of foreign nations. The Boxers were styled "the Loyal Fists." On the 21st June Prince Tuan and Kang-Yi were declared to be the supreme chiefs of the "Volunteer Harmony Fists." All these acts meant that the energy of Prince Tuan had cowed all the Manchus to submission, if indeed they had not long secretly entertained the same opinions as himself, and were only too glad to join in any attack on the "barbarians." It is to be supposed that Yung-lu and Prince Ching were occupied in defending the persons of the Empress-Dowager and the Emperor Kuang Hsu, as well as in preventing Tung Fu-hsiang's soldiers from accomplishing the murder of the ambassadors.

On this theory we must suppose that Yung-lu and Prince Ching had only a mere remnant of the grand army on their side, otherwise it is incredible that they could have been so powerless. Yung-lu's letter to Tung Fu-hsiang shows that he approved of the anti-foreign crusade, and also of the co-operation of the Boxers. But evidently at the last moment he recognised the stupendous folly of attacking the civilised world, and tried to undo the mischief before it became too late. Also he must have seen what lawless, deluded ruffians the Boxers were. To Yung-lu's credit, therefore, let us recognise that he threw in his lot with the moderate Conservatives headed by Prince Ching. Moreover, the attitude of the viceroys and governors, under the guidance of the veteran Liu Kun-Yi, also opened the eyes of Prince Ching, Yung-lu, and all the Manchus of the Empire. These had counted on the loyalty of the provinces, without which even the most fatuous amongst them know they can do nothing effective against the foreign nations.

Even on June 29th the dreadful consequences of Prince Tuan's acts had dawned on Prince Ching and his colleagues. The concentration of all the armies of the world towards Pekin became a dead certainty, and this fact was soon known among the clansmen and others of the Imperial Family. There was, presumably, a return to reason, and a memorandum was despatched to Chinese ambassadors abroad laying all the mischief at the door of the Boxers. This clever piece of special pleading is almost certainly the work of Yung-lu, but though Prince Ching and he doubtless tried to turn the tide of Manchu feeling, they were powerless as regards the troops that had already mutinied and were under the immediate control of Tung Fu-hsiang.

Of all the viceroys and governors, only three or four governors attempted to comply with the request made to them to proceed with reinforcements to the north. Two of them are friends of Kang-Yi and admirers of the Boxers. Fortunately they could not get the Hunan corps of Nanking to proceed with them ; as the latter flatly refused to go without the old viceroy Liu, who is a Hunanese. Li Ping-heng went north, however, with what other troops he could obtain. He had them dressed in Boxer uniform, and left in the trail of his march smoking villages and unspeakable suffering.

It is difficult to say absolutely to which of the two factions the Empress-Dowager showed most indulgence. She certainly approved of the training of young people as "Boxers," and hoped to utilise their invulnerability. Boxer professors were requested to instruct inmates of her palaces in the drill and principles of the *I Ho Chuan.* The Empress-Dowager sanctioned Kang-Yi to procure suitable Boxer teachers for the heir-apparent and other princes. The edicts, reluctantly issued in consequence of the protests of Ministers, show clearly that Her Majesty did not desire to punish "the patriotic volunteer train-bands," as the Boxers are otherwise called. The troubles are ingeniously ascribed to lawless ruffians who somehow became mixed up with the good, loyal, and well-conducted Boxers, and to wicked rogues who joined the flock of the good and virtuous European Christian missionaries, in order, under their protection, to take advantage of the people. The Boxers should on no account be touched, the bad Christians should be warned, and only the wicked, lawless, and turbulent should be severely punished. These edicts had the effect of stimulating the Boxers to greater efforts. Fanatics do not require much encouragement. The zeal of the "wearers of the red girdle," as the Boxers may be called, may be compared with the enthusiasm and ecstasy of the bearers of the red cross in the age of the Crusades. Their objects too are very much the same. The followers of the Prince of Peace justified the most bloody battles and the most atrocious massacres of the Mussulmans, for no other reason than that the Holy Land of Palestine was in their hands. Incendiarism, pillage, and murders overwhelmed the East, and the people of Christian Europe fell upon the Mohammedan nations as wolves upon sheep. But the Mohammedans were not exactly sheep in their harmlessness. The consequence was that countless Christians lost their lives in these campaigns, and in spite of their momentary victories, the Holy Land remains to-day in the dominion of the "unspeakable Turk." Likewise we shall find the Boxers of China persisting in their crusade against Christians, in spite of defeats, as long as the ruling classes openly or secretly patronise their organisation. As popes and bishops were the supporters of the Crusaders, so the Empress-Dowager, Prince Tuan, and Kang-Yi are the promoters of the anti-christian propaganda. The ruthless General Tung Fu-hsiang is a veritable repetition of Peter the Hermit, but, curiously enough—is it the nemesis allowed by divine providence?—Tung is a follower of the Prophet. As a Mohammedan, Tung Fu-hsiang possibly sees in himself the avenger whom "Allah the ever-compassionate and merciful" has deputed to punish the Christians. He has worked with the devotion of a true enthusiast. In the public capacity of a Chinese general it is his duty to defend the Empire against invasion, and in his private capacity as a Mussulman he sees special rewards ready for him in heaven for the meritorious deed of exterminating rampant infidelity. "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet" will surely ring from the camp of Tung Fu-hsiang, and will impel the infuriated Mohammedans to their rush, which none but the most disciplined of troops can successfully resist. After the open countenance given by Her Majesty to the Manchu Yu-hsien,* who received from the Empress-Dowager the character *Fu* ("luck"), written by her own hands, as a very special sign of Imperial favour and recognition, all the aspirants to fame and honours naturally turned to the Boxer movement as the most certain road to emolument and glory. There have been attracted towards this organisation men with different principles and with diverse aims, who yet agree in the one design of persecuting the Christians until they abjure their faith. History teaches us how futile must be any such crusade; but fanatics like Tung Fu-hsiang, Kang-Yi, and Prince Tuan do not act as ordinary men. They do not calculate consequences. The "Rebel Emperor," as the Chinese viceroys style Prince Tuan, if not a scholar or a politician, is at any rate a brave man, worthy of a better end than that which he has fatuously chosen for himself. With some education, and with wiser counsels than those of the execrable Kang-Yi, he might have done real good to the Empire; but now that he has nearly succeeded in bringing the dynasty to an end, he must suffer for his ignorance, pride, and rashness. A semi-barbarian, he is really a patriot in his own savage way. And there is undoubtedly an element of heroism in the man who sacrifices everything to realise his ideal, and who, stung by what he regards as the indignities inflicted by the world on his country, has the courage to challenge the civilised nations of the earth to wrest the Imperial sceptre from his hands.

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* *Vide infra*, p. 242.

CHAPTER XIII

CHANG CHI TUNG

THE Viceroy Chang Chi Tung is one of the many enigmas in the Chinese problem. A wonderful man he is, every bit of it; yet he is very disappointing to his friends. He has essayed the difficult rôle of patriot, and has tried to lead his countrymen in the dangerous work of reform. At the same time he has tried his best to be on good terms with the enemies of reform. A secret hater of foreign culture, he is sensible enough to recognise the value of western methods and western inventions. He has the utmost contempt for the missionary and his heterodox faith, but he recognises that it is his duty to protect an innocent man in his jurisdiction. With these contradictions in his character, the Viceroy Chang is naturally a very much criticised man. We need not doubt that he is a patriot. His comparative poverty, when he might have become a millionaire years ago, is a proof of his honesty, at any rate. What we have to ask ourselves, and to answer, is: What is the attitude of the viceroy to the Empress-Dowager? This is an important matter, and upon the answer we get to such a question must be based the relation of the Allies, and of all progressive Chinese, towards him. For the present, the testimony of missionaries who have been specially favoured with kindness counts for nothing. It is part of Chang Chi Tung's policy to hoodwink the world by his friendliness to them.

Chang Chi Tung is among the finest scholars of the Empire. Born about 1835, in the metropolitan province of Chih-li, Chang had a distinguished scholastic career, and ultimately came out third at the Palace Examination in Pekin out of many thousand candidates. The admission to the Hanlin Academy for such a scholar was merely a question of form. He was soon appointed Literary Chancellor and provincial examiner to Szu-Chuan, and he did everything in his power to encourage learning. Then he held minor appointments in Pekin, and for his able papers on the famine in Shansi he was appointed governor of that province. He had already attracted the attention of the Government by his criticism of the Russian policy towards China. From Shansi he was transferred in 1884 to Canton, where he started a college, and endeared himself to the Cantonese by his repairing roads for the use of carriages, and by his vigorous and honest administration. In consequence of his proposed scheme of building a trunk line from Pekin to Hankow, he was removed to Hankow as viceroy of the Liang-Hu.* There he established iron foundries and cotton mills, as he believed firmly in introducing western methods into the native industries. During the Japanese War, when Liu Kun-Yi was away in the north, he was viceroy of Liang-Kiang,† and as viceroy of Nanking he built the existing carriage road, constructed fortifications on western principles, and employed German instructors to drill his troops. Then in 1895 he returned to Hankow, where he has remained ever since. His works have already been referred to under "Pioneers of Reform." It remains only for us to give an estimate of his character, and especially of his attitude towards the reactionary Manchus.

We have said enough to show that we have a very high opinion of his honesty as an administrator, of his ability as a scholar, and of his wisdom as a pioneer. But we regret to say that we do not think that of late the viceroy has been keeping up his old traditions. He is not to be blamed, perhaps, for his position is exceedingly difficult. It is only by chicanery, lying, hypocrisy, and subterfuges that any man can hold office in China. Let us do the old man the justice to admit that he, perhaps, loves his work better than his reputation, for he knows as soon as he goes all his works will disappear, and, like Brutus, he kills his friends, perhaps not because he loves them less, but because he loves his country more. We do know, however, that the viceroy has his doubts about the social habits of Europeans and especially about western politics. He is, of course, a great hater of the Christian religion. But he believes in reforms of a sort and to a certain extent. At any rate, he is quite sixty-five years old, and cannot be expected to be the same strong individual he was when a young man. It is perhaps only natural that he seeks to avoid difficulties, and to throw in his lot with the strongest party at Court. All this is very natural, and let everything in his favour be put to his credit, for the honest man deserves his reward, whatever may be his mistakes.

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* *i.e.* the two Hus—Hupeh and Hunan.—ED.

† The two Kiangs—Kiang-su and Kiang-si.—ED.

A few particulars about his attitude to progressive Chinese and to Christians will enable us better to understand the man. Now in 1898 the then Governor of Hunan, Chen Pao Chen, was a very liberal-minded man, and under the advice of Hwang, the late Consul-General in Singapore, he meditated inaugurating municipal boards and establishing a regular police. In addition he would allow steam launches to ply in the rivers within his jurisdiction. The assent of the viceroy was necessary, and was applied for. His Excellency Chang replied that it was not proper or expedient to adopt these measures. In replying to the criticism of Governor Chen against all possible objections to his scheme, the viceroy said that if foreigners forced steamers upon them, then it was not the fault of the mandarins, and that if they remained faithful to the old ways there would always remain something for them to do. Now this is the view of most of the Conservatives.

During the reform fever, when the Emperor himself was the most eager reformer, Chang Chi Tung was a busy writer of memorials, suggesting changes or offering criticism, all in a friendly tone, conformable to the reform edicts. To the astonishment of the world, he threw in his lot with Liang and others in attacking the *Pa Ku* system of writing examination essays. He himself suggested many original schemes. In fact, the reformers looked upon him as one of their best advocates, and perhaps as their staunchest friend.

The times changed. The *coup d'état* came, and Kuang Hsu became a prisoner in the "South Sea" within the Imperial city. All the reformers were on the list of the doomed. Chang Chi Tung knew very well what sort of a woman Yehonala was. Consequently his first act was a most contemptible betrayal of his friends in the reform ranks. Yung-I, Tan Tze T'ung, and others* were, not long before, intimate pupils or subordinates of his. In fact, he had instigated them by his example, by his donations, and by his public sympathy. Yet the first thing he did was to telegraph to Pekin that these men should be beheaded. They were killed accordingly, without trial. Truly they perished in the noblest cause for which man has ever died. They were martyred for endeavouring to secure liberty for their people and country. In this disgraceful way Chang shielded himself, and remains till to-day the only man who took part in the reforms of

* *Vide ante*, p. 58.

1898 still in power, not even excepting the Emperor. Hwang, the Hunan judge, nearly lost his liberty, while Chen Pao Chen was dismissed in perpetuity from service. Yet Chang Chi Tung remains. He has managed well to have maintained his place.

Yung-lu became the all-powerful man. So Chang Chi Tung wrote memorials in such a strain as he thought would best please this overbearing Manchu. He now changed his tactics. Instead of urging on the Government to reform, as he did when Kuang Hsu was in power, he exerted his utmost to procure punishment for his old friends, the unhappy reformers. He had been a servile minion under the reactionaries until the Allies declared war against the Government, by forcibly landing troops in order to relieve the Ministers.

We have said that Chang is, in his own way, a sort of patriot. But he is certainly a traitor towards his rightful Sovereign, to whom he owes allegiance. With respect to loyalty to the throne, he has shown himself to be a great and intellectual person, with a small and low capacity for realising the highest moral principles. The Viceroy Liu Kun-Yi requested Chang to join in a protest against the deposition of Kuang Hsu and to co-operate in a petition imploring the Empress-Dowager to restore Kuang Hsu to the throne. Chang's reply was characteristic. He told Liu that it was a family matter between the Emperor and the Empress-Dowager, and he thought it was no business of subordinates to interfere. Doubtless in this way Chang has eased his conscience, and, like so many other professors of expediency, has changed his principles to suit the times. Liu Kun-Yi was disgusted, and consequently telegraphed in his own name such a strong appeal on behalf of the Emperor that Yehonala and Prince Ching were prevented from pursuing their policy of humouring Prince Tuan.

The action of Chang Chi Tung has been very displeasing to numberless literary men in his provinces, and even to his subordinates. Most of these are reformers at heart, but are obliged to keep very quiet. In January last Ch'en Chuen Min, the Judge of Hupeh, together with about fifty of the civil and military officers and scholars, approached the viceroy beseeching him to head their signatures in a petition which they wished to send to the Empress-Dowager on behalf of the Emperor. Chang Chi Tung was stupefied. He could not speak, but after looking over the document, he shook his head. No persuasion could move him. He made a motion with his hand as if to show that their necks would be in danger. The judge could stand this sort of cowardice no longer. He rose from his seat to again address the viceroy, who continued wagging his head to signify dissent, whereupon Ch'en Chuen Min uncovered his head, a most disrespectful thing to do according to Chinese etiquette, and dashed to the ground his official hat and button, the insignia of his rank and office. Without further saying a word, he walked away from the *yamen* of his superior. Now Chang Chi Tung felt rather ashamed of himself about this affair, and so took the insult quietly, not wishing the incident to become widely known. He has not even reported the judge for misconduct and disrespect. Naturally the people of Hunan and Hupeh thought a great deal of those patriotic and loyal men who bestirred themselves on behalf of the imprisoned Emperor. The people considered Chang a traitor and a coward, a time-server who forgot his Sovereign, and who acted against his own conscience. The good and honest people began to dislike him, and his subordinates secretly despise him at the present day.

Chang Chi Tung

In May, 1900, Chang Chi Tung held a review of his troops. He appeared in great state; but he had scarcely showed himself when a shot was fired at him, and the soldiers became disorderly. A mutiny was feared, but was fortunately averted by the viceroy's speedy exit. Such a man, therefore, has no real power.

It is impossible not to remark that the Chang Chi Tung of the last two years is scarcely the same honest man whom we admired years ago. He has changed considerably for the worse. Being now in the unfortunate position of being hated by his old colleagues the reformers, and of being suspected by the Manchus, Chang Chi Tung has been trying his level best to show his fidelity to the dynasty. Some who know him assert that the old viceroy has lost his usual energy and perspicacity, and is now the victim of a melancholy which distorts his views, and which drives him in the direction of least resistance.

Elsewhere we have indicated the value of Chang Chi Tung's pioneer works. His so-called Reform Treatise contains implications which are quite anti-foreign. Moreover, the viceroy has again and again issued anti-

Christian proclamations, in spite of his friendliness to missionaries.*

When the Boxer troubles arose it was observed that Chang Chi Tung was a secret sympathiser with the movement, although the European press never heard about this. As a native of Chih-li, the viceroy has his people in the districts of disturbance, and it is alleged that he has friends in the Boxer camp. If so, we can understand his anxiety to send munitions of war up to the north. He intended to ship a large consignment, but the capture of Tientsin decided him to send the same by the inland route. For peace in the south he joined Liu Kun-Yi in signing the agreement with the foreign consuls, but meanwhile he did everything in his power to send men, money, and arms to the support of the Empress-Dowager. Two civilians, a governor, and a treasurer under him, were despatched to Pekin with a well-equipped army, ostensibly "to rescue the Emperor." Now this is a certain proof that Chang Chi Tung was the means by which reinforcements were being sent from the Yangtze to the Court.

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* An appeal to the Chinese people by Chang Chi Tung, with reference to their attitude to foreigners, recently published in England, will be read with interest by those who read the above sketch of the famous viceroy of Liang-Hu from a native pen, and will raise in their minds the question whether the appeal is chiefly meant for native, or for foreign eyes.—Ed.

For a time Chang remained perfectly neutral. But no sooner had the Empress-Dowager got out of immediate danger than he began to show considerable zeal on her behalf. In obedience to a decree from Tuan he changed the drill and the words of command in use by the troops, and quietly ordered his fairly well disciplined troops to resume antiquated Chinese tactics. He issued a most equivocal proclamation, which was a menace to the Christians. This was pulled down as soon as the consuls saw through it. But he had gained his point with the Manchus. He had done it, but, alas! the foreigners compelled him to withdraw. And not very long ago he beheaded some twenty young fellows for alleged complicity in a plot to burn Hankow. Now it is a fact that placards were found urging protection of the people, and especially of all foreigners and foreign property. The men were arrested in the foreign concession. The missionaries wrote thanking the viceroy for his promptitude in suppressing a diabolical faction of incendiarists. Well, many of the young men were well educated, and more than three were certainly students, whom Chang himself had sent to study in Japan. They were admirers of the reform schemes, and were themselves anxious to do something to relieve their country from monsters who degrade their office and who sell their country. It was easy for Chang Chi Tung to satisfy the frightened missionaries that these unfortunate men represented the Boxer bogey in the Midlands. Will the truth ever be known? Alas, some men, perhaps most, do not know their real friends! Why has Chang Chi Tung suddenly sprung upon the reformers? Chiefly, no doubt, he is anxious to square himself with the Empress-Dowager, who, Chang thinks, will return to power. The fact seems to be that the old viceroy, while he is the ostensible friend of the foreigners, has really been a secret agent of the Empress-Dowager in the anti-foreign crusade.

CHAPTER XIV

LI HUNG CHANG

HIS Excellency Li Hung-Chang has the reputation of a great name. Like all politicians who wield a great influence, he has probably more detractors than admirers. No Chinaman has a greater renown in Europe and America, and perhaps none is more deserving of the high honours which the aged statesman bears. Once upon a time he might have left behind him almost an untarnished name as the Bismarck of China, and a glorious impress upon the history of the times as the ablest, the wisest, and the strongest satrap of the Manchu Emperor.

How he rose from civilian ranks to join in the military campaigns of Tseng Kuo Fang against the Taiping rebels, what literary honours he carried at the Hanlin Academy, the manner in which he broke faith with General Gordon as to the treatment of rebel chieftains who surrendered, are now too well known to require more than a passing reference.

Loaded with honours, decorated with the Yellow Riding Jacket, the Chinese equivalent of a V.C., and endowed with fabulous wealth, Li Hung Chang will always be remembered as the great viceroy of Chih-li, who during many years succeeded in deceiving himself and the world as to the progress and the power of the Chinese Empire. Like his colleague, the viceroy Chang Chi Tung, he dreamed of a regenerated China, guided to power through his own schemes. Knowing the importance of a strong navy, and having experienced the value of foreign military systems, he had the sense to create a powerful navy with headquarters in Tientsin, and to reorganise the Chinese provincial army according to the requirements of European warfare, with the creations of the fortresses of Wei-hai-wei and Lu Sun K'ou, better known as Port Arthur. He looked with satisfaction on his well-drilled battalions and the formidable array of his fleet. Europe watched with keen but ignorant interest; while Japan was silently making real progress by a thorough mastery of the great principles of western culture. When Japan was ready the Mikado, by a remarkable act of grace, conferred upon his people a constitution which greatly startled the world by its spontaneous growth and by its marvellous completeness. All at once the Japanese people were freed from despotism, and through their newly acquired parliament plunged into the dangerous arena of party politics. For a time grave fears were entertained that civil war would be the result of enfranchising millions who were not quite ripe for a democratic constitutional monarchy. But, happily for Japan, serious troubles broke out in Corea, and the Government of Tokio found it very convenient to turn the attention of political agitators from domestic affairs, and to direct it towards the Hermit Kingdom. The Japanese have always been very patriotic and very touchy, and when it was rumoured that the army of Li Hung Chang was likely to be more than a match for "the dwarf soldiers" of Japan, the firebrand of war spread through the little Island Empire with the rapidity of lightning. The world witnessed with astonishment and admiration the brilliant successes of the Japanese both by land and sea. The complete collapse of the costly fabric raised by Li Hung Chang necessitated his visit to the shores of Japan as a humble suppliant for peace, and while carrying on the peace negotiations he was wounded in the face by a low-class ruffian, who fired a cheap pistol at the Chinese envoy. The old man bore his injury with resignation and fortitude, while the Mikado was greatly moved by the unfortunate accident, deplored alike by the people and the Government of Tokio, and through a wise stroke of magnanimity won the applause of the civilised world for his humanity and moderation in granting to the Chinese an unconditional armistice until the recovery of the Chinese plenipotentiary. The famous Treaty of Shimonoseki was therefore, literally speaking, a very painful task for Li Hung Chang. His vigorous frame survived the shock, and before long he recovered, and successfully carried through the arduous duties entrusted to him. Justice demands that his work in this connection should be put down as one of the greatest achievements of his life.

But the Manchus did not appreciate the difficulties of Li Hung Chang, nor were they sensible of the moderation of the victorious Japanese. Li Hung Chang received scant thanks, and narrowly escaped with his head. The report got abroad that he had been bribed by the Japanese. The old viceroy in self-defence published all the telegrams despatched by him to show with what zeal he had worked to encompass the discomfiture of the enemy. The telegrams afford curious reading, inasmuch as they show his special aptitude at setting one power against another. It was evident that from an early stage of the war he had depended more upon the jealousy of the nations than upon the efficiency of his troops. The Russians, it seems, led him to understand that they would resist Japanese invasion of the mainland of Asia; but when the time came for expelling the Japanese, the Muscovite who gave the promise of help explained away the undertaking entered into by him. Then when Li Hung Chang returned from Japan he resolved straight away to annul the treaty which the Japanese had wrested from him as the minimum of concessions they would accept. His telegraphic despatches show that he recommended the Government to offer Formosa to England, which in return was to be asked to give Japan a good thrashing. The Russians were to be given the Liaotung peninsula. This spiteful scheme, though unworthy of a great statesman, betrays the puerility of the old-school politicians of China. England refused absolutely to rob

Japan of the fruits of her conquests. But Russia, ever keen to raise her prestige in the Orient, undertook to recover for China the lower provinces of Manchuria, including Port Arthur. Whereupon the foolish Chang Chi Tung proposed that Formosa should be presented to Russia, the great friend of China. Then followed the remarkable alliance between Russia, her hysterical ally France, and the good neighbour of France, Germany. Japan was compelled to yield, and England lost a great opportunity of exhibiting her undoubted powers in the Far East, and had consequently suffered by loss of prestige. But it was impossible for England to remain a neutral and yet take side with either of the belligerents. It is needless, therefore, to say what England might have done. Li Hung Chang scored a great point by recovering Manchuria for his master, but little did he suspect that the Muscovite was really helping himself to a dainty bit. When the new Czar's coronation was to be celebrated the Emperor —that is, the Empress-Dowager—sent Li Hung Chang to represent China. While in Russia he was well received, and was completely bought over by the canny politicians of St. Petersburg. Then it was that he truly sold his country by the secret treaty with Russia, and by the virtual cession of Manchuria to the tender mercies of the Muscovite.

At home Li Hung Chang was feared and detested by the Manchus. The Emperor would have liked to cut off his head; and all the nobles wanted to see this powerful Chinaman stripped of all his honours. In fact, his honours had been for a time taken away by the Emperor, but his staunch friend the Empress-Dowager soon restored them all to him. Yung-lu, however, was too much for him, and Li Hung Chang worked his way to Canton.

Towards the reformers Li Hung Chang secretly showed his sympathy, but openly he kept aloof from them. Of course, Li knew that reforms would save China, but his own reform schemes had failed so miserably that perhaps he felt he ought not to raise a hornets' nest about his head so soon after the troubles he had gone through. His moderation in not pushing the persecution of the reformers is another evidence of his good sense. When the order came to him to destroy the grave of Kang Yu Wei's ancestors he simply ignored the edict, and when relatives of reformers came into his clutches he merely imprisoned them. But he dared not show any open recognition or mercy to his old friends. So when Yung-lu sent down to Canton the wretched Lin Hsio Hsun to accomplish the arrest of Kang, Li Hung Chang afforded him every facility. Lin made Hongkong his headquarters, and employed over fifty detectives to hunt out the reformers. Li Hung Chang knew that he was overshadowed and that the Empress-Dowager was deeply incensed against the reformers.

But when the attempt was made to depose Kuang Hsu, Li Hung Chang memorialised, and pointed out the danger, and afterwards joined Liu Kun-Yi in the protests which are so well known. Yet on the first of the Chinese New Year he hesitated for a time, not knowing which to put up, the tablet of Kuang Hsu or that of the new Emperor, and it was only at three in the afternoon that he received word from Pekin to give honour to Kuang Hsu.

Li Hung Chang was not unpopular in the south. In Canton he has certainly kept the difficult province in good order, for he was greatly feared. The old ferocity of his younger days lingers in the village traditions, and he may boast that his name is revered by his people.

He is not a favourite of the reactionaries, neither has he favoured their policy of encouraging the Boxers. He has consistently pointed out, although very mildly, the folly of the recognition of the *I Ho Chuan.* When serious troubles broke out in the north Li Hung Chang offered his services to the Government, as he felt sure that he could put down disorder in the province which he had governed during so many years. Of course, Prince Tuan paid no heed to him. It must be a cruel blow to Li Hung Chang to learn that the labours of his lifetime have all been destroyed by the insanity of the Manchus. His wonderful arsenals, his Naval and Military Colleges, his Tientsin University, and his Medical College, and his newly bought torpedo-destroyers, have all vanished into thin air. With what feelings he would return to view his old quarters in Tientsin may be better imagined than described. Fallen, fallen indeed is Li Hung Chang. Yet he watched the operations of the Allies without fear or doubt as to the ultimate result. When no news came from Pekin he joined Liu Kun-Yi in the agreement with the Allies to keep order in the south, provided no invasion of territory was attempted. But as soon as he received authentic news that the ambassadors were still safe and that the Empress-Dowager was not only alive, but also anxious to fall back upon him again as the only man who could save the Empire, he left Canton at once, and gave out that he was proceeding to take up the post of viceroy of Chih-li. He was well received by the Governor of Hongkong, but the Europeans of Shanghai were indignant at the guard of honour accorded to him. When he reached Shanghai he was scarcely recognised as one of the greatest men in the Empire, and the foreign consuls treated him with scant courtesy.

It was soon clear that he had gone to Shanghai to start his old game of setting one country against another. It is hard to say that he has altogether failed, although his impudent suggestion to stop the march of the Allies, in order to save the lives of the Ministers, was received throughout the civilised world with the disgust and indignation which such a proposal justly deserved. He evidently knew what he was about. He quietly bore all that people said about him, and he worked away through his henchmen, the Chinese Ministers abroad. His asking of Lord Salisbury's advice through Sir Chichen Lofengluh is a very amusing incident, and his lordship's reference to this is not without a touch of sarcastic humour:—"Li Hung Chang had been ordered to go to Pekin" (writes Lord Salisbury to Sir C. Macdonald), "and rather wanted our advice. I strongly advised that he should go there if he could be of any use in suppressing disorder, so long as he could do so with safety, but that we should be sorry if his life should be in danger. I said that he must be the best judge of the risk, as he knew his countrymen better than I did."

Finding that the proposal he launched met with indignant refusal in some quarters, or was coldly received in others, Li Hung Chang patiently waited. He moved the other viceroys to request the Powers to consider the person of the Dowager-Empress as inviolable, and he tried his best in Shanghai to make overtures to the foreign consuls. The British Consul religiously kept away from him, as from an unclean thing. Li Hung Chang is a sensitive old man, and we do not doubt that he will remember this. On the other hand, the French and Russians have treated him with consideration. There is no room for doubt that he is strongly Russophile, but we do not share the opinion of those who regard Li as a traitor to his country. At the present moment he is undoubtedly the only sensible man left; and he will yet be able to negotiate successfully, unless the Allies fall out among themselves. But he is a very dangerous man. He is now in the north. Do we know what he will do? Well, Li Hung Chang just wishes to wipe out the stain which has attached to his name in consequence of the loss of Formosa. He is known by the Chinese to be willing to die in harness or in battle to show his loyalty to the Dowager-Empress. Put Li Hung Chang in power in Chih-li, give him troops, and he will not refuse to obey Tzu Hsi's edict calling upon him to fight the "barbarians." Be it known that Li Hung Chang, like all the old viceroys, dislikes the foreigner from the bottom of his heart. That is not unnatural, perhaps, when one considers what foreigners have said of him, for whatever appears in European papers concerning him and China is translated for him by his secretary.

Li Hung Chang understands the situation in which China is placed perhaps much better than any other Chinaman now in power. But he is quite unfit to place China on a new footing. The utmost he could do would be to restore her to her old position. Now this could scarcely be the desire, either of the Powers or of the increasing number of progressive natives who are watching the course of events with the keenest interest and with the greatest concern. As a mere tool in the hands of the reactionaries, and as an accomplice of Russian diplomacy, Li Hung Chang must be fully made to realise that the Empress-Dowager's party is irretrievably beaten. No appeals on behalf of the Empress-Dowager and her clique of inhuman wretches should on any account influence the Allies. The first essential must be the return of the Emperor, as the only one with whom the Powers will treat; and the second is the arrest of all those concerned in instigating the rabble and in letting loose the soldiers of the regular army. Remember, men like Li Hung Chang, Chung Chi Tung, Prince Ching, and Prince Tuan, only understand that they have been defeated when terms are dictated to them, and no compromises are considered — put aside all reactionary mandarins. But the most important thing to be done is to ensure that the people throughout the Empire shall know that the Manchus have been beaten, and that future withdrawal of foreign troops will mean that H.M. Kuang Hsu has succeeded in establishing a stable government. The influence of Li Hung Chang is very great, so that while the Allies should avail themselves of Li's services, they, or rather the majority of them, must keep a good look-out for the doings of the astute old man. And the representatives of England must see to it that Li Hung Chang does not humour Russia against the world; and that Russia does not sell the Allies to the flagitious Yehonala.

PART III

EUROPE AND CHINA FACE TO FACE

A CHINESE VIEW
OF THE SITUATION

CHAPTER XV

DIPLOMATIC APATHY

THE reports of a terrible massacre of helpless and innocent men, women, and children in Pekin, happily untrue in fact, though not in intention, and widely believed for a time, came as a thunderclap on those who had not been watching the march of events since the so-called Palace Revolution of 1898. To such it would appear that the most momentous crisis in the history of the Far East had instantaneously cropped up, and found the whole of the civilised world unprepared to meet it. Of course, the inevitable breaking up of the semblance of a government at Pekin has been predicted by scores of writers since the bubble of China's supposed inherent vitality and strength was pricked by the remarkable success of the Japanese forces. But the most pessimistic would scarcely have imagined that the partition was so soon to become, to all appearance, a problem of practical politics.

The foreign representatives at Pekin might surely be supposed to have kept themselves fully informed of everything of any consequence that took place in the Chinese Empire, and especially in the neighbourhood of Pekin. But unfortunately they were caught almost totally unprepared by the whirlwind of rampant incendiarism and carnage, and when they woke up to seriously grapple with the situation they were much too late.

The precipitate steps, which at the last moment they felt obliged to take, may lead the uninformed to conclude that the organisers of the Boxers had kept their movements a great secret. The very unpreparedness of the representatives, and the fact that women and children were still left behind in Pekin, demonstrate convincingly that the officials of the various legations did not apprehend the real nature of the troubles that were coming. Even after the murder of the Japanese Chancellor of the Embassy there was no word of any strong concerted action. Surely the ordinary observer, unacquainted with the progress of the Boxers, may be justified in the idea that the Chinese and Manchu fanatics, like the sepoys of the Indian Mutiny, had waited quietly and silently and then pounced upon the unfortunate

Europeans in Pekin and its neighbourhood—all unwarned and unprepared.

The truth, however, is quite the opposite. For months Shantung, where the troubles first arose, was the scene of the most shocking disorder. Pillage, incendiarism, murder, and unheard of atrocities desolated villages and ruined towns. The utmost distress and suffering prevailed. Thousands of native Christians were reduced to starvation and misery, while numberless chapels were burned or looted, and everywhere the missionaries were threatened, if not actually assaulted. Then at the beginning of the year news came of the shocking murder of Mr. Brooks, an English missionary; and then, of course, Sir Claude Macdonald took immediate steps to urge upon the Tsungli Yamen the necessity of punishing the murderers and of putting an end to the outrages.

While the British Minister was waiting the Tsungli Yamen did practically nothing, though the Empress-Dowager was clever enough to tender her "regrets"; and Yuan Shi-kai, the Governor appointed to supersede the notorious Manchu Yu-hsien, sent a note that he would not spare the rioters. These notes pacified the officials of the British Legation, and nothing more was done until too late. Though the British Minister had nominally won his point in urging upon the Chinese Government the removal of Yu-hsien from the seat of disorder, and had in fact secured the removal of that well-known hater of all foreigners, yet, in truth, the success of Sir Claude Macdonald was very questionable. At any rate, the only effect of Sir Claude's protest was merely to increase the audacity of the Boxers and the magnitude of their operations.

Many people felt glad that Yu-hsien was deprived of his office as governor of Shantung through the exertions of Sir Claude Macdonald. Unfortunately the British Embassy allowed, without an emphatic protest, the whole of their efforts to be nullified. No sooner was Yu-hsien away from the capital of Shantung than he was received at Court and was loaded with special honours.* Moreover, he was immediately promoted to the governorship of a neighbouring province, where, in fact, he had better opportunities of doing harm to British interests. To everyone, save apparently the officials of the Legation, this action of the Empress-Dowager seemed a counter-stroke to the diplomatic protest of Sir Claude Macdonald, and as such it should have been strenuously resented. But

* *Vide ante*, p. 208.

the reactionary government was quietly allowed to mature its plans. The Boxers were not slow to watch the conduct of the members of the Empress-Dowager's Government. They naturally regarded the honours bestowed on their friend and protector, His Excellency Yu-hsien, as an indication of Imperial favour, if not something more than this. And so, as it has been well described, the anti-foreign crusade of the Boxers "grew by denunciation and thrived on penalising edicts."

When we turn to the edicts themselves, issued as a sop to the British Minister, in answer to his protests, we find it difficult to say which was more deserving of condemnation, the cunning of the author of the edicts or the vacillating attitude of the foreign ministers at Pekin. The connivance of the Government was plainly visible, and this Sir Claude Macdonald emphatically pointed out. But—and "there is the rub"—he went on trusting to the sincerity of a pack of "traitors," who, while he was yet negotiating with them, with the purest and most friendly motives, were planning the utter destruction of himself, of all foreigners, and of all Chinese in any way connected with them.

The most serious thing against the ambassadors is they paid absolutely no attention to the representations, which must have reached them on all sides, as to the existence of a secret plan to carry out a wholesale massacre of native Christians and all foreigners. Of course, the position of officials in the Diplomatic Service is entirely different from that of mere laymen, in whatever walk of life. We have a right to expect that our representatives in the British Consular Service should keep themselves well informed of all movements in the Chinese Empire, and in particular of those most likely to operate injuriously against our interests. Unfortunately Sir Claude Macdonald either did not believe the reports which were being freely circulated, or did not exert himself to find out the truth.

In 1898 we lost a grand opportunity to help China on the upward path, for our officers remained unconscious of all the momentous changes which were occurring within the palace, almost before their eyes. Then, when the evil was done, they threw in their lot with the reactionary Manchus, and now they have reaped the whirlwind which they had helped to sow. We have all read Sir Claude Macdonald's account of the *coup d'état* of 1898. He shows that he had utterly failed to grasp the value of the reforms which were proposed by Kang Yu Wei, and that he did not realise the exact cause of poor Kuang Hsu's overthrow. Had he seen that Kang Yu Wei was hated because his views were progressive, and necessitated friendly intercourse with the world, and with Britain in particular, he would not have written as he did, that "the ill-advised counsels of Kang Yu Wei had done more harm than good," or words to that effect. As he was unsympathetic, or perhaps indifferent, to the cause of the reformers, so this time he relied on the assurances of the Manchus, who hardly two years ago openly declared they would expel all white men. It may be said that all the other ambassadors knew no better. Precisely. That is the reason for more pity. Though we think Russia, France, and Japan knew more than we imagine. Russia, true to her policy, would allow the Manchurian clique to rot as quickly as possible, and thus "to stew in their own juice." She has now got what she wants, and the pity is that we let her. Japan sincerely tried to help the reformers, but as neither England nor the United States saw at the time how their interests were involved in the fall of Kang Yu Wei and in the ruin of the cause of progress, Japan was obliged to remain an unwilling spectator of the retrograde movements of the Empress-Dowager's Government.

As far as the ambassadors were concerned, the voice of prophecy was but the irresponsible wail in the wilderness, and as such was left unheeded and unrecognised. It might, of course, be said that the cry of "Wolf!" has been so repeatedly heard in recent years that the result has been what we would naturally expect. Baseless rumours had become exceedingly common, and it is right that responsible people like the foreign ministers should not credit idle tales. Admitting the justice of all this, yet we submit that in face of the warnings published week after week in the pages of the *North China Herald* and other papers, it is, to put it very mildly, inexplicable that something effective was not done until it was useless. Fully three months before the outbreak near Pekin we read this emphatic appeal to the ambassadors: "If there was ever a time for all the foreign Powers to act in absolute unanimity in compelling the Chinese Government to do what it professes to be trying to do —now is that time." Again, on February 24th, 1900, we find the following significant sentence in italics: "*The situation is hopeless unless there is united and determined pressure from the foreign ministers.*" But even earlier symptoms of a great upheaval were clearly described.

As far back as February 14th we find the following prediction in a leader of the *North China Herald:* "It is morally certain the opening spring will witness a rising such as foreigners in China have never seen before. The whole country from the Yellow River to the Great Wall will be a blaze of insurrection which will not only annihilate every foreign interest of every sort in the interior, but will drive every foreigner out of Pekin and Tientsin under conditions which it will not be difficult to foresee. . . . Unless strong and united efforts are now put forth, it is as certain to take place as any future event can well be. Those who are interested in preventing it will act accordingly." So concluded the writer, in the full hope that the officials in Pekin would act. But unfortunately for the world, for China, and for themselves, they allowed precious time to pass by; and instead of hurrying all their women and children out, and sending at once for help, they continued to humour the wretched time-serving parasites of the reactionary government who were for the time being members of the Tsungli Yamen.

Early in May a plot to exterminate all foreigners was disclosed by those Chinese who were friendly to Europeans, and who were mostly reformers. These poor patriots had to suppress all their views and aspirations or take the consequences, and had become ridiculous in the eyes of the foreign representatives, save perhaps the Minister for Japan and his staff. Anyhow, the Chinese who took the trouble to warn their European friends "had been rather laughed at than thanked for their pains."

We need not detain our readers with further quotations. It can easily be shown that months before the Boxers reached Pekin the most unquestionable evidence of a vast organisation to expel foreigners was being published day by day in Shanghai. The most unmistakable signs of an upheaval were being pointed out by sober, experienced, and careful Europeans. The legations were warned in good time. In fact, to those who were watching events nothing seemed so certain in May as the outbreak of fanaticism in North China. The only surprising, and, indeed, from the ordinary individual's point of view, quite unintelligible thing in the whole affair, from the very beginning, in the middle of 1899, until the final catastrophe, is the apparently complete ignorance of the foreign representatives of the treachery which was intended to seal their fate, although the existence of a plot to exterminate foreigners had been freely circulated.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TSUNGLI YAMEN

THE Tsungli Yamen is the name given by the Pekin Government to the board of officials who act as intermediaries between, on the one hand, foreign representatives and Chinese ministers abroad, and, on the other, the central authorities of the Chinese Empire. It has been popularly styled the Foreign Office of China; but in this, as in most other cases, nothing but a superficial comparison is possible between the institutions of the East and those of the West. The Tsungli Yamen possesses the semblance of the Foreign Office of a western state; but beyond the fact that both have primarily to deal with international affairs the analogy ceases at once. There is, in fact, no parallel in any civilised country to this bureau of contending officials who invariably quarrel among themselves, and only unite to thwart or hoodwink the representatives of the despised foreigners.

It must be remembered that this department—if such it may be called—is not of native growth. An exotic introduced during the state of duress and despair into which the Manchus were thrown by the victories of the English and French forces, the Tsungli Yamen has never shown any tendency to thrive; but during its existence of forty years has exhibited symptoms of progressive decay. It has attained the bad pre-eminence of having been regarded with suspicion by its own creators—the Manchu rulers—and of having been treated with scorn by its clients, the representatives of western nations. However, some of the officials who have from time to time served in the Tsungli Yamen are among the most liberal-minded of the high mandarins of the Empire.

The list of officials of this Yamen includes such well-known names as those of Prince Kung, Wen Siang, the late Marquis Tseng, Chang Yin Huan, and Li Hung Chang. The truth is, that the Manchus and conservative Chinese officials regard the Tsungli Yamen as a needless appanage of the Pekin bureaucracy and an evidence of the continued supremacy of the barbarians. Arising out of the ashes of the Yuan Ming Yuan, the Summer

Palace, this Foreign Office of the Manchus seems always to have retained about it a good deal of the smoke of the memorable conflagration forty years ago; so that time after time anti-foreign mandarins have petitioned the Government to close this Yamen as a means of curbing the increasing insolence of the "white-face hobgoblins." At the start the Manchus and Chinese could find no parallel in all their annals for an institution which would have to deal with "outside barbarians" on terms of equality with the heaven-appointed Ruler of the "Central Empire." They could understand a Colonial Office which had to supervise the affairs of conquered and tributary tribes. The equality of foreign countries was never frankly admitted, and the Tsungli Yamen was invented as a subterfuge in response to the unanswerable logic of foreign arms.

The name of the new office is, in Chinese, *Tsung-Li Ko-Kuo-Szu-Wu Ya-men. Ko-Kuo-Szu-Wu* may be rendered "the affairs of every or each country." *Tsung* is translated "general" or "universal," as in the word "Consul-General." *Li* is used in the sense of to manage, or control; while *Ya-men* is the common Chinese name for a public office. The inexperienced Westerner sees nothing objectionable or unreasonable in the name. A Foreign Office has to deal with affairs relating to different countries, and surely in one sense this is the literal meaning of the Chinese phrase. But there is a hidden, an esoteric interpretation of no little importance to the ceremonious Oriental, to whom reality is of far less consequence than form. The word *Li*, "to control," reminds the people of the Li Fan Yuan, the "Board in charge of Tributary Nations," and places the Treaty Powers in a doubtful position as regards their relation to the Tsing rulers. Dr. Martin, whose experience of high mandarins is unique, describes this petty official chicanery as "characteristic of Chinese conservatism and soothing to Chinese pride."

The Tsungli Yamen was founded in 1861, and consisted at first only of three members, Prince Kung and two Manchu colleagues, Wen Siang, and Kwe Liang, who figure prominently in all European records of Pekin in the early sixties. Under the intelligent superintendence of Prince Kung it gradually grew to be an important bureau, and as foreign intercourse and foreign influence increased, both its members and its subordinate staff had to be augmented. By the accretion of new members and the addition of numerous interpreters, secretaries, and clerks, the Tsungli Yamen began to assume the appearance of an important department of State, but the Chinese Government never seriously regarded it as an integral part of the Pekin administration. Its constitution, however, though based on that of the *Chun Chi Chu*, or Grand Council, is radically pernicious, for the conflicting interests represented by the members prevent the possibility of any satisfactory, harmonious, or united action. All the officials hold one or more high metropolitan posts, either as Grand Councillor or Secretary of State in one or other of the Six Boards. The Secretaries of the Yamen, being chosen from the most successful scholars, have often been promoted in rapid succession to fill responsible positions in the provinces or legations abroad. The facility of promotion from this department has of late years become notorious, and peculation in high quarters is suspected to be at the bottom of these sudden promotions.

The Tsungli Yamen is the buffer between the victorious devils and the discomfited Manchus. As such its members could hardly expect to get the love of the one or the respect of the other. The high officials are high only in name, for in reality they are as powerless as the Emperor himself! None of them would dare to act without consulting the powers that for the time being rule the Palace and the Court. The consequence is that needless waste of time and energy is the only outcome of all the parleys between foreign representatives and the Tsungli Yamen. Diplomacy is not the word to describe the peculiar intercourse carried on in this Yamen between the world and the Manchus. The European representatives are all gentlemen anxious to serve their respective governments, but so are the Manchu and Chinese dignitaries, only their powers are not identical, and consequently their methods vary. The Tsungli Yamen officials have never been intended to act in a responsible capacity. There has never been any intention to entrust this body with the performance of important diplomatic duties not forced upon the Government by foreign nations. The Manchu and Chinese officers are expected to parry the representations of foreign Powers, and by any means within their reach to delay the performances of disagreeable undertakings, however solemnly entered into. They must checkmate the encroachments of western intruders, and must cultivate the art of setting one group of devils against another. Should anyone display marked friendliness to foreigners, or betray any sign of honest endeavour to settle matters in an amicable and just spirit, that man's days in the Yamen are numbered. Unusual deference, amounting almost to servility, has been shown by mandarins to individual foreign ministers; but this has been dictated probably by expediency, if not by something more sinister in the background. The foreign representatives could not get a satisfactory *tête-à-tête* with one responsible person. There was never any secrecy. Two or three members of the Yamen would always be present, and beside these there would be the attendants, who earned a handsome *honorarium* by divulging the secrets of the Yamen. The intercourse between the foreigners and the mandarins has always been severely formal, and none of the officials dared to accord to their foreign colleagues the ordinary civilities of social intercourse. Lurking beneath the studied politeness and pleasantry manifested by these diplomats in Pekin, discord, jealousy, and hatred entered into most of the dealings between foreigners and the Tsungli

Yamen. As each minister tried to get the utmost out of China, the Tsungli Yamen found it an easy task to set one European state against another.

Despite the outward friendliness, it is evident that the transactions of the Yamen are often conducted under abnormal conditions; for while the Manchus and Chinese on their part have consistently tried to impose upon the foreign representatives irksome formalities, the foreign ministers have as persistently objected to these, and in some cases have chosen to treat the haughty mandarins almost with open affront. Again and again the foreign representatives found the Yamen their equal, if not their superior, in diplomatic fencing; and consequently the ambassadors of two or three notorious Powers have often had to appeal to the *jus gladii* before they obtained their ends. It can scarcely be conceived that amicable relations are possible under such conditions. Does not the European press also, even in China itself, perpetually preach the gospel of brute force? Chinese statesmen know this, and, rightly or wrongly, they have persuaded themselves that with foreigners physical force must be the sole arbiter in the settlement of many long-standing differences.

This view is exactly the opinion of most Europeans in respect of their relation to the Chinese. It may therefore be said that, under the cloak of diplomatic civilities, the Chinese and the foreign representatives have always been on the brink of war. The foreign ministers themselves watch one another's movements, so that from one cause or another they are more frequently thwarted in their own designs than gain any solid advantage from the Tsungli Yamen. The foreign ministers have often too many private national interests to look after to have time or desire to co-operate in any large measure for the permanent amelioration of the government of the great Empire. Besides, international complications and racial idiosyncrasies also stand in the way, and it was the normal state of affairs to find the foreign legations hostile to one another. This jealousy and meddling policy of the Powers became very embarrassing as well as convenient to the Chinese; and ever since the famous coalition of Russia, France, and Germany on a historic occasion, the policy of most of the Powers has been either to treat the Tsungli Yamen with open threats, or to extract from them promises not to alienate Chinese territory to others.

But the day soon arrived when the foreign ministers had to put aside all their jealousy and difference, for a common danger of overwhelming magnitude threatened to destroy them all. The brewing of the Boxer trouble was being watched with different degrees of interest in the various legations. The Russians, who had very few representative merchants or missionaries in China proper, were not so deeply interested in the problem as were the English, the French, and the Germans. Sir Claude Macdonald did not at first realise that the disturbance would assume the proportions it ultimately did. The French minister, however, was positive that destruction loomed ahead, and that serious steps towards relief of the legations should be undertaken without the least delay. After some days of discussion, the state of affairs in Pekin changed for the worse. The ministers agreed to telegraph for guards to protect their legation, yet even then the representatives of England and Russia had not quite shaken off the sedative influence of the Tsungli Yamen.

Owing to the preponderance of the Manchu element, the Tsungli Yamen has not been able to do very much to bring to bear upon the

Government the fruits of the experience acquired by its members through intercourse with other nations. The princes are really the stumbling-blocks. Imperious and haughty, they combine love of ease with the utmost contempt for the Chinese mandarins. The servility of the latter is only surpassed by that of down-trodden, low-caste Hindus. The worst of it is that, with few exceptions, Manchu nobles absolutely refuse either to learn or to be taught. No Manchu noble will tolerate any subordinate, especially a Chinaman, who claims to stand on his own dignity and who refuses to lower himself to please the chief. One of the causes of China's downfall is the unreasonable suspicion which the officials of the Tsungli Yamen have always entertained against those Chinese who have become friendly to foreigners and who have acquired a knowledge of some foreign tongue. The educational missions all ended in smoke, because the high officials gave no real assistance as soon as it was discovered that American women and Chinese young men could so far understand one another as to enter into bonds of wedlock, and that the returned students affected airs and opinions undreamt of in the philosophy of the mandarins. The persecution of Yung Wing, LL.D, of Yale, U.S.A., by members of the Tsungli Yamen because he had an American wife, drove from office one of the brightest ornaments of the Chinese diplomatic service. Moreover, it is quite risky to contradict or correct the errors of a great official. Those Chinese of the Yamen who have had the courage of their opinions have always fallen victims to their zeal. Many years ago the Marquis Tseng found himself a discredited politician in Pekin, while not long before that he was being lionised in the West as the most successful Chinese diplomat that had ever visited the courts of Europe.

The rivalry and jealousy between Manchus and Chinese have always been very keen. The impartial dispensation of public offices among Manchus and Chinese, wisely insisted upon by the early emperors of the present dynasty, did more to reconcile the Chinese to the Manchu yoke than anything else. But the renaissance, initiated by Kang Yu Wei and his friends, spread into the Imperial palaces, and threatened to overwhelm the old régime of absolute power and arbitrary government. The anti-foreign schemes of Kang-Yi and Yung-lu are as much anti-Chinese as they are anti-foreign. As a matter of simple truth, the Manchus are now anti-foreign because the progressive Chinese exhibit such perverse and incorrigible leanings towards western culture. As the Chinese had endeavoured to change the time-honoured institutions by working through the Emperor, the Manchus sought to modify existing usage by weakening the Chinese element in all departments of the government.

When matters reached this crisis there was uncertainty for a time as to which side would prevail. The Tsungli Yamen suffered perhaps more than any other department, because the Conservatives looked upon it as the only medium through which the hated devils could communicate with the Emperor on the Dragon Throne!

Before the *coup d'état* of 1898 the members of the Yamen included Prince Ching as the President, Li Hung Chang, Weng Tung Ho, Yung-lu, and Chang Yin Huan. These men were the best-known in the Empire, and all the Chinese members had distinguished themselves as progressive men of sorts. Among the lesser lights may be mentioned Hsu Yin K'wei, now the viceroy of Fukien, Tsung Li, Liao Hsiao Heng, and others. In the spring of 1898 the Emperor was groping his way towards emancipation. Among his first acts was an edict for the dismissal of Li Hung Chang, Ching Hsing, and Hsu Yin K'wei from the Tsungli Yamen for their active or secret enmity towards the reforms suggested. After the fall of the Emperor, Chang Yin Huan was arrested and cast into prison. But for the friendly services of the British Legation he would have been summarily beheaded, yet his only crime was recommending Kang Yu Wei to His Majesty. This aged official was loaded with indignities and cruelly despatched as a convict to the frontier roads of Turkestan. He was recently beheaded in Urumtsi, as if to seal the connection between the reform crisis and the present revolt.

Naturally all the Chinese members were intimidated by the fate of Chang Yin Huan. The Board was gradually packed with friends of Prince Ching and Yung-lu. Of course, there were reactionaries among the Chinese too, and there were a few liberal-minded men among the Manchus. Liao Hsiao Heng remained on the Board as the only Chinaman who was in the Yamen prior to the *coup d'état* and who had shown some sympathy with the reform schemes. He retained his post by discreet silence, as soon as he foresaw the dangers which were coming.

When Prince Tuan's pet scheme failed, in January, 1900, because the attitude of the central and southern Chinese became threatening, the subterranean ill-feeling burst out with all the violence of a volcano, and Manchu and Chinese revived the *animus* which had inspired their ancestors as hereditary enemies. In Pekin more Chinese suffered, and even the friendly Liao Hsiao Heng was sacrificed, because he was too honest not to conceal undoubted facts, and too loyal to retain his post and allow an innocent colleague's head to be chopped off without protest.

Then a whole series of events arose in rapid succession. A wholesale crusade against the world was being organised. The Manchus had not been idle. Yung-lu and Kang-Yi arranged everything. They packed the Tsungli Yamen with their parasites, so that in June, 1900, Prince Tuan and his Manchu friends found seats on the Board. The names of those who recently joined with Tuan are Nat'ung, a Mongol noble or prince, and Chi Siu, a Manchu. The Tsungli Yamen gave very little assistance to the foreign ministers, either from unwillingness or from the strict orders of Her Majesty. Yet it was clearly evident that some members of the Yamen realised the insanity of the scheme of the Tuan-Kang-Yi faction. But they could do little beyond mildly suggesting caution or humbly pointing out the dreadful consequences. Prince Ching practically confessed to Sir Claude Macdonald that the Yamen did not expect to be able to influence the Court in any way. If any plot to massacre all Europeans in Pekin was ever discussed in the Tsungli Yamen, it could only have been introduced by Prince Tuan, whose intense patriotism is coupled with a fiery temper and a reckless zeal. Subsequent events have proved that the Chinese members endeavoured to dissuade the Manchus from pursuing the fatal policy to which they had committed themselves. The Chinese were in a hopeless minority. Their protest and appeals only had the effect of drawing upon themselves more suspicion and greater contempt.

The unfortunate rupture at Taku between the Allied Fleet and the Imperial troops decided the course which the reactionary Manchus were to take. Up to the 17th of June there had been no overt demonstration by the regular soldiers, and Admiral Seymour testified that prior to the fighting at Taku and Tientsin his column had only encountered the rabble companies of Boxers. The capture of the forts drove the soldiers to join the Boxers, while the Manchus looked upon the proceeding of the Allies as the beginning of the end of their cause. They plainly intimated their fear through the Tsungli Yamen to the foreign ministers, who confessed they had no knowledge of the fight, and had not sanctioned it. To the Manchus it appeared that the partitioning of the Empire had already commenced. One last effort must be made to resist the barbarians. When the news of the battles at Taku and Tientsin reached Pekin they told chiefly of the losses of the Allies and the successes of the Imperial soldiers. Prince Tuan wanted no more pretext to lead his men against the legations. Tung Fu-hsiang had already promised his adhesion to the Manchu side, in his note to Yung-lu, and it was he who besieged the legations with his wild Kansu hordes. Yung-lu acted as we might expect he would do from his previous career. He caused it to be made known through the Chinese viceroys and others that he was protecting the foreigners, but we now have it on the authority of the legation inmates that Yung-lu was one of the generals who directed the disgraceful attacks against women, children, and non-combatant foreigners. However, it would seem that the Emperor Kuang Hsu and the Chinese members of the Tsungli Yamen went to *kowtow* to Her Majesty to withhold her assent to the edict authorising the attack on the legations. The Emperor's appeal was met with indignation and scorn, while the daring Chinese Hsü Cheng Cheng, Yuan Ch'ang,* and others sacrificed their lives on behalf of philanthropy and for their country's sake. Hsü Cheng Cheng and Yuan Ch'ang were cut into two halves across the abdomen, a horrible mode of execution not practised since the Middle Ages.

When the foreign Powers come to adjust the settlement of the affairs in the north they should not forget the noble martyrdom of these patriotic men. Let wrath be visited on the culprits, but do not allow the excesses of Manchurian despots to make savages of the avengers of injured civilisation. The people, it is true, believe they have grievances against the Government and against foreigners, but those who have taken part in the anti-foreign

* *Vide* Appendix, § VI.

crusade are like a drop in the ocean compared with the millions who peacefully carry on their labours despite tyranny and oppression. Already these innocent people have suffered terribly. One shudders at the contemplation of the horrors which would be enacted if the soldiers of European Powers were to be let loose on the teeming peasantry in the way that some writers have thoughtlessly suggested as the act of vengeance which Europe would demand. The real condition of the Chinese people could not be in the mind of the Emperor William and of those who urged decimation of the province of Chih-li, when they one and all spoke in passion—fired with indignation at the rumoured massacre of foreigners in Pekin. When the true story of the imbroglio is told by impartial eye-witnesses, it will be made perfectly clear that already the injury borne by the Chinese is appalling and incalculable. We have seen that Chinese officials even have been sacrificed by the Manchus. When the Powers come to settle the terms of peace, the interests of civilisation and of humanity alike demand that those who had consistently, if ineffectually, pleaded the cause of progress and of the foreigners should not be overlooked. It would be stupendous folly if the Powers allowed the Manchus again to return to their cruel tyranny and oppression. Having gone so far as to capture Pekin, the Allies ought not to be satisfied with anything less than the restoration of the Emperor and the due punishment of all those concerned in the anti-foreign crusade. The Allies should guarantee the safety of the Emperor, and Pekin ought to be well garrisoned with foreign troops until a settled government has been inaugurated. If the foreign Powers are sincere in maintaining the integrity of the old Empire, now is their chance of enforcing upon the rulers a new policy which, while giving full privileges to foreigners, does not overlook the rights of the sons of the soil!

The building of the Tsungli Yamen was burnt in the early stages of the Pekin troubles. According to the Chinese, the Boxers became unmanageable towards the middle of June; but facts clearly prove that the Government made no honest effort to repress them. Soldiers openly assaulted members of the staff of one or two of the legations, and the Japanese chancellor was unfortunately murdered. The Tsungli Yamen was alarmed beyond measure, and though Baron von Ketteler, the German Minister, requested a conference, the Yamen, or rather some members of the Board, pointed out to him the danger of going to the Yamen, and requested him to remain indoors. The request was, of course, preposterous, but Baron von Ketteler probably did not suspect that the soldiers would dare to molest him. He therefore resolved to visit the Yamen. He was fired upon on his way, and was fatally wounded. Thereupon the German guards set fire to the Yamen building in retaliation, and open war broke out in Pekin between the legations and the reactionary authorities.

The inscription formerly hung outside the porch of the Yamen read thus, "Peace and happiness to the Centre and to the Outside Regions!" (*Chung Wai Fi Fu*). We suggest that in the new building which will replace the old one the legend should be altered to the Confucian maxim, ***Chu Chung Hsin***, "Hold faithfulness and sincerity as first principles." Moreover, the Allies should insist that one responsible minister of acknowledged honesty be appointed to act as Foreign Secretary. Let him be assisted by a dozen or more assistants, but on no account should the Allies consent to treat in future with ten wrangling, ignorant, and irresponsible mandarins. This official should be vested with full powers by the Emperor himself, and should be secured against the caprice of despotism by well-defined conditions attached to his appointment. Otherwise it would be impossible for any man to act successfully as intermediary between the Powers and the Manchus. Since on the slightest pretext a man who has shown himself to be friendly to foreigners, or to be in sympathy with liberal measures, may be sent into exile or to the block, the helplessness and the perfidy of the late Tsungli Yamen surely justify the Allies in demanding that in future they will not have to negotiate with irresponsible mandarins.

The wire-pulling of these big officials must be a very expensive business. Yet it evidently pays some foreigners very well in the long run. Chinese officials in Pekin are ever on their guard. The Manchus watch the Chinese and *vice versâ*; and besides there are the censors, whose notoriety depends on bringing to light the misdeeds of high mandarins. Hence the art of squeezing must be more highly developed in order to overcome the system of espionage, so thoroughly understood by the Chinese.

The officials of the Tsungli Yamen are naturally better known to Europeans than are other mandarins. Yet for reasons stated wished to make the world believe that, after all, the Emperor did not care a straw for the lives of the reformers. What are the facts?

The founders of the dynasty had provided the Salic law against the usurpation of a female scion of the Imperial clan, and consequently Yehonala has so long reigned, not in her name, but in the names of Tung-Chi and Kuang Hsu. This was a necessity on her part. During the minority of Kuang Hsu all the edicts appeared in the name of the Emperor, Kuang Hsu, but in their case, there is no possibility of a question as to their real author. Prince Kung and Yehonala worked the edicts, and Kuang Hsu's name was appended as a matter of form.

In these State matters conventionality means much, and the omission of one or two formalities makes all the difference in the world between legality and its opposite. Now it is the custom for the regent in resigning office to indicate by an edict that the ruler has attained the proper age, or had recovered from serious illness, and thus has superseded the regent, whose authority ceases *ipso facto*. The ruler himself issues an edict taking over the reins of government. These procedures were observed in the case of Tung-Chi and also in that of Kuang Hsu ten years ago.

Now there is no doubt that in 1898 Kuang Hsu was compelled to sign an edict of retirement, almost amounting to abdication. The Empress-Dowager resumed the management of the Empire. By that edict she was empowered to use the Emperor's name in all documents issued by her. It is scarcely probable that the Emperor was ever consulted since that time, and it is certain that when he disagrees with the Empress-Dowager, his opinion is disregarded. The friends of Kuang Hsu have often petitioned the Empress-Dowager to restore the Emperor to his rightful position. They petitioned, in fact, that the old lady would issue the edict determining her regency in order that Kuang Hsu might resume his duties. This Yehonala has strenuously refused to do. The Empress-Dowager must therefore solely be held responsible by the foreign Powers for all the bloodshed, the destruction of property, and the misgovernment of the last year.

The poor Emperor had absolutely ceased to exist as a ruler of the Empire. He might just as well have been dead so far as his existence in Pekin was concerned. All the fundamental and long-established functions of the Son of Heaven remained in abeyance. The sacrificial rites, which the Emperor in person must perform in his dual capacity as *Pontifex Maximus* and *Rex Sacrorum*, have been allowed to lapse. The sacred *Penates* were neglected, and no burnt offerings graced the table before the ancestral *Lares*. The solstitial solar feasts passed off without the Imperial libation, and neither new year nor birthday festivities relieved the monotony of Kuang Hsu's confinement. In truth, the neglect of these important duties made it quite plain to the people that the Emperor was *functus officio;* yet the reactionary Manchus were not prepared to adopt the scheme of Prince Tuan, after they had discovered the attitude of the South towards the Emperor. The Manchus and Chinese, who are in official positions, know that the Emperor is perfectly innocent of all the things said and done in his name. They, too, know that the war declared against the world was brought about through the treachery of Yung-lu, Prince Tuan, and their colleagues. The future position of the Emperor is therefore a problem of the highest importance from a legal and political point of view. If the Allies are determined, after all their efforts and after all the dangers to which their ambassadors have been exposed, to settle the Chinese problem once for all, they must see to it that the inhabitants throughout the length and breadth of the Empire are made to realise that the Manchu cabal has been effectually destroyed. This can only be done by the restoration of Kuang Hsu to the throne, with due celebrations in the capital and throughout the provinces. At Court the foreign ministers should be received in one of the Imperial palaces on terms of perfect equality as the representatives of their respective sovereigns.

In the meantime let us return to these edicts. They are clearly the work of the Manchu *junta*, with the approval of the Empress-Dowager. The old lady has sufficient power to make her opinion respected, and we may safely say that no edict has been published since the *coup d'état* of 1898 that has not received her sanction. She has of late lost her former firmness of character, as we have pointed out, but the fact remains that no one has the courage to act without her. The true secret of her power in the last couple of years lies probably as much in the mutual jealousy of her favourites as in the devotion of her admirers. Prince Tuan, Yung-lu, and Prince Ching were all at sixes and sevens, and no doubt their dread of one another was very convenient to the old intriguer, who favoured them all in turn. She could have made away with one and all of them if she had liked, for she possessed the power in her hands. No one could enter her palace armed even with a small knife or accompanied by a guard. Therefore if she had been honestly sincere in wishing to repress either Prince Tuan or Yung-lu, all she had to do was to summon them before her and put them under arrest. The fact that she did not do so proves that she authorised all the acts committed by these men. Documentary evidence is not required. She had authority over them, and they have remained until the present moment her devoted adherents.

It would seem for a time that Prince Tuan assumed the rôle of a dictator, but subsequent events show that he was acting in harmony with the Empress-Dowager. All that he did was to take the place which the Prince Kung had formerly filled for years. He became the trusted adviser, and the Empress-Dowager saw things in the same light as himself. The edicts issued while the foreigners were being besieged in the legations were all approved by Yehonala. There was a time when some of us believed that perhaps Yehonala had repented of her conduct at the last moment, and that she did not desire to have the legations attacked by her troops. It was also thought that Yung-lu and Prince Ching were acting in conjunction with her to secure the safety of the foreigners.

If any documentary evidence is necessary to prove the guilt of the Empress-Dowager and of all her chief advisers, save those who have been put to death, there is the edict calling upon the viceroys to prepare to resist the invasion of foreigners. We are not here discussing whether the Empress-Dowager was acting in accordance with her notion of the demands of responsibility. We do not doubt that all the Manchus have acted with as deep a sense of patriotism as they know. But the question is, What is to be done with the Empress-Dowager? The edicts clearly prove that she has been the soul of the traitorous cabal, and that she was quite able to control all the Manchus and the soldiers under them.

Her restoration to Pekin would be a frank admission by the Powers, despite all their boasts and threats, that they had actually been outwitted, if not beaten, by the reactionary government, and the position of foreigners in China would be made immeasurably worse. Yehonala must on no account be permitted to enter Pekin or to reside in the metropolitan province. It would scarcely be worth while to organise a punitive expedition for her arrest, if in the meantime the Allies could persuade the reactionary authorities to allow the Emperor Kuang Hsu to return to Pekin. If the Emperor could not be got at, then the Allies would be confronted with the real problem, which would surely tax to the utmost their wisdom, their forbearance, and their patience. Perhaps through the services of Li Hung Chang, the Empress-Dowager may be moved to sacrifice herself for the sake of the Empire. Put it in this way, and she might not be unwilling to add another glory to her name. Anyhow, she must make in an edict a full avowal of her sins, and must confess that through her folly in trusting in men like Kang-Yi, Yung-lu, and Prince Tuan, she had compelled all the nations of the world to capture the capital, in order to preserve the foreign ministers, whose lives were jeopardised by their insane acts. She should also then recite the defeats of the Manchu forces, and declare that Pekin having been captured, the Allies would insist on the full restoration of the Emperor, whose power had been wrongfully taken away from him. The edict should then formally transfer the authority to Kuang Hsu. The publication of such an edict would be an indication that the Allies have gone about their work wisely and well. Of course, the Emperor would announce his return to power; but unless these two matters are attended to, all the achievements of the Allies will be nullified by the astute Manchus. The Empress-Dowager must be made to resign her regency, unless the Allies can get hold of the person of the Emperor, and can restore him as the *de facto* ruler. In that case, he could, with one stroke of the vermilion pencil, deprive the Empress-Dowager of all legal authority to interfere in State affairs.

Simple justice requires that the enemies of civilisation should be severely punished; but no punishment is adequate which does not restore to their rights all those who have in any way suffered at their hands. The restoration of Kuang Hsu to the throne of his ancestors, which he has occupied for twenty-five years, would assuredly be a happy outcome of a most lamentable conflict, which the Manchus have wantonly brought on themselves. The reactionaries are very unpopular in the middle and southern provinces, and millions would hail with joy the return of the Emperor to power. There is no real difficulty in establishing his authority, for it is universally acknowledged throughout the Empire. The country would then return to a period of internal peace and prosperity, and foreign commerce and missionary enterprise might be expected to progress, without meeting with further organised obstacles. The most progressive Chinese will come to the front, and with the assistance of the Powers, the new government of Kuang Hsu is sure to advance by leaps and bounds.

On the other hand, the large number of reformers now scattered broadcast over Japan, America, and various British colonies would cease from further agitation and would return to their different peaceful callings. If Kuang Hsu be not restored, it would not be surprising to find that the reform associations would become revolutionary societies, and before long a great revolution would sweep over China, and entail untold misery on the land, with incalculable loss to the commerce of the world. The causes of revolutions are not usually within human control, yet, looking backwards, does not the historian discover that had certain antecedents not been, certain events could scarcely have followed? Now the seeds of a great revolution are all germinating in China. The Allies have just now the means of averting the threatening danger. Will they see it? The grievances of the Chinese race against the rulers of the land and against foreign nations are accumulating, and sooner or later must be settled. What these are must be discussed in a separate chapter; but we may here state that there are many indications to show that the Chinese are not going to remain ignorant and isolated much longer. As in France and in America, the masses of China will one of these days rise up to assert their undoubted rights in their own land. But if a just and honest government were established in Pekin, the grievances of the millions would be attended to. Then, in ten or fifteen years, China would completely recover from the disasters of the last few years. However, the best hope of the Chinese is to be found in their unbounded confidence in their own powers, in their devotion to learning, in their unsurpassed veneration for authority, in their recognition of the superiority of moral right over brute force, in their attachment to the duties and amenities of social life, and in their implicit belief in the dignity of labour. Whatever happens, whoever rules, the prosperity of such a race stands out as a certainty in the vista of futurity.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WHITE PERIL: FROM THE IMPERIAL AND OFFICIAL STANDPOINT

RIGHT and wrong are purely relative terms, and even justice is not based upon any invariable standard of truth by which the conflicting interests of contending nations may be judged. Nevertheless, the highly educated man is able to exercise an impartial judgment, when given a fair opportunity to hear the issues on both sides. Upon this really important fact are based all principles of law and arbitration. As before long the Allies will have to come to a definite arrangement with the Manchus and Chinese, it is absolutely essential that the people of Europe should know something of the claims, the grievances, and the hardships which have at last driven a section of a long-suffering nation to declare war against the whole world. It is premised, of course, that a prolonged peace is desired as the outcome of the present international campaign in China.

Therefore the basis of peace must be just; that is to say, must take into account, not merely the claims of European commerce and enterprise, but also the inherent rights and interests of the sons of the soil. Hitherto the relation between Europeans and Chinese has all along been strained by mutual misunderstanding, followed by each side trying to take advantage of the other.

Let us hear what the Manchus and Chinese have to say of the actions of Europeans. When we know what their feelings are we may probably understand why they have so madly rushed into a conflict which must have foreboded certain defeat for them.

When we speak of the interests of the Chinese we must really take into consideration the Imperial rights and immunities, the privileges of the mandarins, the vested interests of the scholars, and the indefinable claims of the governed. The rights and interests of the millions are perhaps the most important to be considered, especially as in the past they have invariably been neglected. They include the mercantile, the communal, and religious elements of the national life. The real trouble of any Power meddling with the affairs of China is not the military opposition, but the inertia of the Chinese civilisation itself. The Manchus overcame China chiefly through submitting themselves to the Chinese civilisation. Therefore, in their case, we have the anomaly of a comparatively small nation dominating so many millions of a people physically and intellectually equal, if not superior to them. But since nonpartition is the policy of the Allies, the only sound policy possible under the circumstances, there is no question of uprooting the Chinese civilisation; on the other hand, there must be no further attempt on the part of the foreigners to bolster up a dynasty which will prevent the natural evolution of this ancient civilisation. If from purely selfish motives the Allies simply prop up the Manchu dynasty and allow it free scope to repress with brutal violence the just aspirations of the progressive Chinese, then there will be no real peace in China.

> " Breathes there the man with soul so dead
> Who never to himself hath said,
> This is my own, my native land?"

The " Yellow Peril" has for some time been a spectre in the European imagination, and prompt as well as vigorous measures have been adopted to stem the tide of Mongolian invasion, which is carried on, not by arms, but by the irresistible arts of peace! While the white men were shutting the doors of their different colonies or settlements against the Chinese, they were claiming unheard-of rights in the native land of the very people to whom they had denied rights and privileges already secured to them by treaty between the sovereign representatives of the white and yellow races. Apart from the anomalous conditions of "extra-territoriality," the European and American subjects claim the right of residence in China for various purposes, while the American and Australian Governments forbid Chinese subjects, under heavy penalties, even from entry into their respective countries. The Chinese have not yet seen the superior sense of justice claimed by missionaries for all Christian nations in these irreconcilable positions of the white man.

From the Imperial point of view the treaties entered upon between the Son of Heaven and the foreign Powers are agreements dictated by superior force, and therefore liable at any moment to be set at naught. The privileges claimed by foreigners are embodied in the various treaties, but it is very questionable if the high mandarins ever study these documents; in fact, it is doubtful if some of the treaties are to be found in Pekin. Provincial authorities remain profoundly ignorant of the conditions of the various treaties, and except, perhaps, the secretaries of the Tsungli Yamen, no mandarin seems to have taken any trouble to master their provisions in order to carry them out. Moreover, the treaties have never appeared in the *Official Gazette*, and it is very unlikely that the originals are still to be found in the Government archives. The ignorance of the mandarins is perhaps not surprising, when we remember that even the details of the great Tsing Penal Code are not properly studied. The Manchus look upon the treaties as evidence of the national humiliation, and have been very unwilling to force the natives to study them; while the Chinese consider that they are not parties to any agreement made between the foreigners and the Manchus without their knowledge or acquiescence. They were never considered or consulted, and therefore they have consistently ignored the existence of the treaties. Besides, the right of foreign interference in domestic matters has never been conceded.

The subjects dealt with in the different documents agreed upon between the Chinese and foreigners are viewed from different standpoints by the two contracting parties. Diplomacy, as understood by European nations, is yet almost an unknown quantity in China. The Chinese regard diplomacy as merely an acknowledgment of subjection by the conquered to the victors, and imagine that it does not extend beyond certain State functions, including investiture of honorary titles, exchange of presents, payment of tribute, regular attendances at the Imperial Court, and the customary salutations (*kowtow*, etc.) If the foreigners had swept away the Manchus and set up a king of their own to rule the country, the Chinese and the Manchus could understand the position well enough. But the dynasty being left intact, and indeed being supported against the people, as in the case of the Taipings, there is no reason why foreigners should interfere with the internal economy of the Empire.

The Imperial regulations provide that an official shall not trade, yet the people see that official occupation is merely trading by Government. Are not offices sold and bargained for, and proffered to the highest bidder? Justice may be bought, and the mandarins may barter away for a certain sum the revenues arising from various sources. On the other hand, there is nothing to hinder a merchant from purchasing office, so that the law is more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The unfortunate people feel the oppression, and suffer from the corruption. They cannot rise against the mandarins, but some foreign Powers will come to the assistance of the Government. While foreign nations exert their power to compel the Government to treat their own subjects and *protégés* with every consideration, the natives of the soil have none to whom they may appeal. The Manchu representatives remain obdurate, while the foreigners look on with indifference.

In all the treaties there is a clause that the Chinese will be bound to accept the interpretation of the foreign text. This condition has led to endless confusion, and to a neglect of these documents by the Chinese. They never feel sure what the foreign phrases and idioms may imply ; and they have found that foreign diplomats do not hesitate to force, when desirable, any interpretation they like on general phrases. The technical, analytic, or inductive implications of a particular text are entirely beyond the comprehension of the mandarin. Perhaps a practical illustration will make this much clearer than any amount of writing. The clause tolerating the Christian religion reads simply enough, but does not contemplate all the consequences which follow. The founding of churches and building of mission houses involve many questions affecting the land laws, as well as the communal interests of the inhabitants. *Feng-shui*[*] may be a pure superstition, but the natives of China believe that it is as indispensable to their well-being as light and air. The disturbance of a local *Feng-shui* by a church spire is considered as much a grievance as the erection of a hideous tannery beside Westminster Abbey would be. Is it not a fact that missionaries are not amenable to Chinese law, and that for all practical purposes the territories acquired by them pass over from the sovereignty of the Manchus?

The "most favoured nation" clause was doubtless conceived by the diplomats who were afraid that more subtle rivals might, with suaver methods, procure from the Chinese what they would refuse to yield through brutal compulsion. Yet it is obvious that the same clause has done much harm to the interests of the foreigners themselves, and even greater harm to the Chinese. It sets up international jealousy, and tends to foster the national pride and egotism of the Chinese. But what progressive men deplore is that it has acted as a check on progress, since the frightened Chinese will attempt nothing, for fear that all the favoured nations will rush to scramble for a bit of the spoil.

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[*] *Vide* note on p. 25, and p. 314.

The most scandalous part of the many questionable proceedings of foreigners is the tariff question. Having, by force, dictated to the Chinese the rate of Customs duties leviable on foreign goods, thereby practically robbing the country of its true independence, the foreign Powers have squeezed every possible advantage, in order to benefit foreign goods, regardless of the interests and claims of native producers. Europeans not in China do not know of the existence of the peculiar Customs Tariff, which has long been a source of great grievance. For the present, just look at the monstrous unfairness in the exemption of European wines, spirits, cigars, etc., from taxation, in fact, all articles used by Europeans for domestic purposes are by treaty excluded from the schedule of dutiable goods. But in Shanghai and Canton and elsewhere foreigners are importing foreign alcohol, not solely for European consumption, yet the Chinese authorities are powerless to control this traffic, which even a mite of a Native State has full control over. The unlimited drinks procurable at Pekin in the legations, during the worst period of the late siege, are thus explained. When we remember these peculiar points in the Chinese Customs Tariff fixed for them by victorious foreigners, we shall see that there is little equity or justice on the side of the foreigners, who only want encouragement for their enterprise. In this connection, Sir Thomas Jackson's recent comment is pregnant of meaning : " No treaties could endure for any length of time, unless the terms are equitable." When foreigners cease to take undue advantage of the Chinese, then perhaps the enmity against them, the *fons et origo mali*, will pass away, and there will be no further anti-foreign riots.

The opium question is a very old sore. The manner in which foreigners interfered with the native authorities who were doing everything in their power to repress the habit, has been pointed out as an indication of the general depravity of Europeans. They are said to be engrossed with one sole idea—the making of money; and if they can make money, they are not over-particular about rights or morals. Nothing has done so much harm to the cause of the missionary as this forcing of the opium trade upon the people. Even native Christians feel very keenly about this matter. The missionaries have therefore consistently attacked this traffic, which discounts a good deal of what they teach regarding unselfishness, benevolence, and virtue, said to characterise those believing in the foreign religion. Passing from the historic to the present-day question, we find that the opium duty allowed by foreign Powers is utterly unfair and inadequate. While the revenue from this source in foreign places, such as Hong Kong and Singapore, has increased by leaps and bounds, the Chinese Government is bound by the cupidity of foreign traders to the same old rate. The Chinese people recognise this, and resent it naturally. Europeans complain that the Chinese are always trying to evade the responsibilities imposed by treaties; the latter, on the other hand, charge the former with the same, whenever the provisions are unfavourable to them. And the Chinese instance the provisions relating to opium, in the Chefoo Convention, which remained unratified by England for ten years. Had China done the same, would not Tientsin have been threatened, and possibly might not Pekin have been captured once more?

Ever since the success of the Japanese the attitude of many foreign ministers, especially of two or three well-known European Powers, has been very much resented by the Chinese. It may be characterised as perpetual menace, and threat of letting loose upon the unhappy Chinese the dogs of war. Patiently, if not servilely, the mandarins put up with the fierce look and fiery language. When the Germans commenced the actual scramble for territory, concessions, and what not, the state of affairs became worse. The thoughtful and educated asked if there was a Chinese Government left, while the masses who suffered, and whose land, held by them from time immemorial, had been taken away from them by ruthless foreigners, did not care whether there was a Government, but took steps to turn out the intruders. Let the Government prevent them if it dare! Apart from the Court complications, which helped to shape Prince Tuan's policy, there is not the least doubt that the Manchu reactionaries had to face the uprising of these Chinese *sansculottes*, and that many of the more manly princes took the side of the common people. We have seen that the movement was at first anti-dynastic, and that on Prince Tuan joining it the plan of campaign was at once altered; the oppressed thought to redress their wrongs by appeal to brute force and to savage violence.

By treaty stipulations the representatives of the Powers are placed on the same footing as the higher Chinese officials. A consul has the status of a taotai, and communicates with a person of this rank alone. But this arrangement has frequently resulted in practical inconvenience, and when any trouble happens the blame is put upon the Chinese officials. It is quite conceivable that the taotai may be far away, or may be absent, so that the refusal of the consul to communicate with, say, a magistrate, may be fraught with actual danger, as in the case of a threatened mob. The massacre of Tientsin is a case in point. The French Consul refused to have any communication with the magistrate, who appealed to him, and informed him that the people were in a terrible state of excitement concerning the alleged killing of infants during divine service.

Foreigners may travel into the interior of

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The circumstances of the foreign residents in China necessitate the employment of large numbers of Chinese. The treaties never contemplated that these subjects of China should cease to be amenable to the laws of the land. Yet in practice the clause which enjoins the mandarins not to place restrictions on the merchants in employing natives has resulted

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Again, the employment of foreigners in the Chinese service has increased the troubles of the mandarin. Fortunately, as a rule, they are honest enough, and the Inspector-General is scrupulous in his treatment of the men under him. But once in a way a black sheep appears. The man Mason, a Commissioner of Customs, who helped to pass arms and ammunition for jealousy, and tends to foster the national pride and egotism of the Chinese. But what progressive men deplore is that it has acted as a check on progress, since the frightened Chinese will attempt nothing, for fear that all the favoured nations will rush to scramble for a bit of the spoil.

The most scandalous part of the many questionable proceedings of foreigners is the tariff question. Having, by force, dictated to the Chinese the rate of Customs duties leviable on foreign goods, thereby practically robbing the country of its true independence, the foreign Powers have squeezed every possible advantage, in order to benefit foreign goods, regardless of the interests and claims of native producers. Europeans not in China do not know of the existence of the peculiar Customs Tariff, which has long been a source of great grievance. For the present, just look at the monstrous unfairness in the exemption of European wines, spirits, cigars, etc., from taxation, in fact, all articles used by Europeans for domestic purposes are by treaty excluded from the schedule of dutiable goods. But in Shanghai and Canton and elsewhere foreigners are importing foreign alcohol, not solely for European consumption, yet the Chinese authorities are powerless to control this traffic, which even a mite of a Native State has full control over. The unlimited drinks procurable at Pekin in the legations, during the worst period of the late siege, are thus explained. When we remember these peculiar points in the Chinese Customs Tariff fixed for them by victorious foreigners, we shall see that there is little equity or justice on the side of the foreigners, who only want encouragement for their enterprise. In this connection, Sir Thomas Jackson's recent comment is pregnant of meaning : " No treaties could endure for any length of time, unless the terms are equitable." When foreigners cease to take undue advantage of the Chinese, then perhaps the enmity against them, the *fons et origo mali*, will pass away, and there will be no further anti-foreign riots.

The opium question is a very old sore. The manner in which foreigners interfered with the native authorities who were doing everything in their power to repress the habit, has been pointed out as an indication of the general depravity of Europeans. They are said to be engrossed with one sole idea—the making of money; and if they can make money, they are not over-particular about rights or morals. Nothing has done so much harm to the cause of the missionary as this forcing of the opium trade upon the people. Even native Christians feel very keenly about this matter. The missionaries have therefore consistently attacked this traffic, which discounts a good deal of what they teach regarding unselfishness, benevolence, and virtue, said to characterise those believing in the foreign religion. Passing from the historic to the present-day question, we find that the opium duty allowed by foreign Powers is utterly unfair and inadequate. While the revenue from this source in foreign places, such as Hong Kong and Singapore, has increased by leaps and bounds, the Chinese Government is bound by the cupidity of foreign traders to the same old rate. The Chinese people recognise this, and resent it naturally. Europeans complain that the Chinese are always trying to evade the responsibilities imposed by treaties; the latter, on the other hand, charge the former with the same, whenever the provisions are unfavourable to them. And the Chinese instance the provisions relating to opium, in the Chefoo Convention, which remained unratified by England for ten years. Had China done the same, would not Tientsin have been threatened, and possibly might not Pekin have been captured once more?

Ever since the success of the Japanese the attitude of many foreign ministers, especially of two or three well-known European Powers, has been very much resented by the Chinese. It may be characterised as perpetual menace, and threat of letting loose upon the unhappy Chinese the dogs of war. Patiently, if not servilely, the mandarins put up with the fierce look and fiery language. When the Germans commenced the actual scramble for territory, concessions, and what not, the state of affairs became worse. The thoughtful and educated asked if there was a Chinese Government left, while the masses who suffered, and whose land, held by them from time immemorial, had been taken away from them by ruthless foreigners, did not care whether there was a Government, but took steps to turn out the intruders. Let the Government prevent them if it dare! Apart from the Court complications, which helped to shape Prince Tuan's policy, there is not the least doubt that the Manchu reactionaries had to face the uprising of these Chinese *sansculottes*, and that many of the more manly princes took the side of the common people. We have seen that the movement was at first anti-dynastic, and that on Prince Tuan joining it the plan of campaign was at once altered; the oppressed thought to redress their wrongs by appeal to brute force and to savage violence.

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writing. The clause tolerating the Christian religion reads simply enough, but does not contemplate all the consequences which follow. The founding of churches and building of mission houses involve many questions affecting the land laws, as well as the communal interests of the inhabitants. *Feng-shui*[*] may be a pure superstition, but the natives of China believe that it is as indispensable to their well-being as light and air. The disturbance of a local *Feng-shui* by a church spire is considered as much a grievance as the erection of a hideous tannery beside Westminster Abbey would be. Is it not a fact that missionaries are not amenable to Chinese law, and that for all practical purposes the territories acquired by them pass over from the sovereignty of the Manchus?

The "most favoured nation" clause was doubtless conceived by the diplomats who were afraid that more subtle rivals might, with suaver methods, procure from the Chinese what they would refuse to yield through brutal compulsion. Yet it is obvious that the same clause has done much harm to the interests of the foreigners themselves, and even greater harm to the Chinese. It sets up international the great Secret Society Ko-lao Hui may be cited as an instance. Though he was banished by his consul, yet the harm done was very great. The Chinese officials had no control over the man, and yet they would be held responsible, both by the Manchu and the foreigner, for any riot under their jurisdiction; and here was a foreigner aiding such an insurrection!

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[*] *Vide* note on p. 25, and p. 314.

The mandarins have remarked that during all these years very few complaints against foreigners have been adjusted by the consuls, on the prosecution of the native authorities. Why? Is it possible that foreigners in China are "parlour saints"? But the Chinese are fully aware that European laws are more lenient than Chinese laws. Yet even allowing for this, there are too many Europeans in the foreign settlements who take advantage of the anomalous position of the Chinese to enrich themselves at the expense of the natives, and to the disgrace of European civilisation.

Then the Christian converts are a perpetual source of trouble and nuisance. The Roman Catholic, and possibly most Protestant natives, openly defy the laws of the land, by refusing to *kowtow* to the magistrate or any other official. Now the *kowtow*, though degrading from the modern European point of view, has ever been the oriental method of obeisance. In China it is only a sign of respect to higher authority, with the same significance as uncovering one's head in the presence of a judge in a European court. In the eyes of the people it would appear that the Christians need not respect the officials, since they may stand face to face and talk to him, while the unconverted heathen must crawl like a worm in the dust. The excuse of the Christian is that his religion forbids prostration to any save the Almighty. There is sense in this, perhaps, but all the same, the presumption is tolerated only because the mandarin fears not the wrath of the Most High, but the foreign engines of slaughter and the hell-hounds of war. In many places the missionary intrudes himself into the Chinese court, and sits beside the magistrate to hear a case between his convert and a non-christian native. The influence of the missionary is very great, and the official is often pestered and worried by the messengers of the gospel. These will defy all the persuasions of the mandarin, and, in spite of entreaties, build a house or a church, as if on purpose to injure the *Feng-shui* of a village. Have some of them not written triumphantly how they had scored against the *literati* and the heathens, and how their dwellings had been planted on the head of "the subterranean dragon," and even overtopped the temple of Confucius? The Chinese mandarins naturally sympathise with the inhabitants, and in such cases they are impelled by motives which no consideration of earthly advantages can affect in the least. If there are honest missionaries, there are also sincere believers in the ancient faiths of Cathay to resent the insidious encroachments of blatant foreign priests, who preach to the heathen the doctrines of self-imposed poverty * and mendicancy, † and yet themselves live sumptuously enough in comfortable houses, surrounded by a wife and a numerous progeny, in the midst of heathen squalor and misery.

From the above considerations the position of the mandarin may, perhaps, be better appreciated. The opposition to further increase of foreign intercourse is inspired, partly by fear of more encroachments, and partly by jealousy and conceit, lest in time the old-fashioned test of fitness be set aside, and lest men trained in the newer requirements oust them from their places. Moreover, they are jealous of the increasing importance of the merchants, who, prior to the advent of foreigners, were so much despised.

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* Matthew x. 9; Mark vi. 8. † Matthew x. 11.

CHAPTER XIX

THE WHITE PERIL: FROM THE POPULAR STANDPOINT

WHATEVER foreigners may think or do, the Chinese believe they have an inalienable right to the possession of land already held by them from the remotest ages. They do not question the authority of the white men to shut them out of America—a colony founded by white men, but they urge by parity of reasoning that they therefore have absolute right to frame regulations on their own soil in respect of foreign residence and entry. When foreign nations impose upon them their peculiar laws in China, the natives feel the injustice, which only their weakness compels them to tolerate. The people know that the interests of the Imperial family, of the *literati* and officials, and of the plebs are not identical throughout, and may at times be conflicting. Whatever may be the stipulations of the Imperial Government, the people whose rights are disposed of refuse to acquiesce without adequate compensation. A good deal of the ill-feeling in the Chinese people against foreigners arises from the utter disregard by the framers of treaties for the interests of the natives—the real possessors of the Chinese Empire. The heartless tyranny of the Government is seen by its bartering away ancient communal privileges, family and individual rights of the people, for a mere trifle without securing for the unfortunate sufferers a fair or adequate compensation. Innumerable questions of poaching on preserved commercial interests, encroachments on family rights in regard to land alienation, disregard of pure decency or propriety from the national point of view, are for ever irritating the people, and have, time after time, driven the more patriotic and desperate individuals to deeds of violence. The millions of China seek only peace. They ask to be left alone to enjoy the quiet blessings of their humble toil, and they beseech the conscientious peoples of the world to save them from "their friends," who, disregarding scriptural injunction* as well as common sense, are a perpetual menace to permanent peace in the land of China.

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"See yonder poor o'erlaboured wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
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Thus sings the patriot bard of Coila, who in these lines forcibly depicts oppression such as the Chinese millions groan under at this hour; and perhaps some day the conscience of a free and enlightened cosmopolitan civilisation, founded on Nature's laws, may be touched, however callous the representatives of brute force and Christendom may be at present.

The grievances of the Chinese may be conveniently considered under three groups—(1) Commercial, (2) Communal, and (3) Religious.

1. Commercially, the tariff handicaps the native merchants, and confers on the foreigners special privileges and immunities. This advantage to the foreigners means extra burdens on the native; and this is not in substitution of former taxation, but an additional levy imposed on native enterprise. What foreigners compel the Chinese authorities to impose upon the Chinese people no British or American Government dares to inflict upon its own

population. The provincial authorities claim the privilege of taxing their own people, and believe they have an incontestable right to do so; but the foreigners have tried to control the power of the officials in regard to foreign goods. Then the people and the officials realise that the Central Government has ignorantly signed away the virtual independence of the nation when it conferred on foreign powers the right to regulate the taxation on commerce.

The Bund fees exacted by the Tientsin municipality awakened the Chinese to a new opening for deriving a further revenue from the people. The *likin* * taxation is evolved in consequence, and is regarded by the authorities as equivalent to landing charges, wharfage, transit dues, etc. The mandarins, therefore, in imitation of foreign municipalities, multiply *likin* stations until native trade and industry are almost strangled. The tea trade has suffered terribly, and is fast diminishing now that Europeans have been educated to relish the flavour and taste of the less aromatic Ceylon tea. The tax on tea is computed to be about twenty-five per cent. on the cost of production, if not sometimes more. Even in this the foreigner enjoys a remarkable immunity. Tea

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* An inland excise on goods.—ED.

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Europe and China Face to Face

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1. Commercially, the tariff handicaps the native merchants, and confers on the foreigners special privileges and immunities. This advantage to the foreigners means extra burdens on the native; and this is not in substitution of former taxation, but an additional levy imposed on native enterprise. What foreigners compel the Chinese authorities to impose upon the Chinese people no British or American Government dares to inflict upon its own

population. The provincial authorities claim the privilege of taxing their own people, and believe they have an incontestable right to do so; but the foreigners have tried to control the power of the officials in regard to foreign goods. Then the people and the officials realise that the Central Government has ignorantly signed away the virtual independence of the nation when it conferred on foreign powers the right to regulate the taxation on commerce.

The Bund fees exacted by the Tientsin municipality awakened the Chinese to a new opening for deriving a further revenue from the people. The *likin* * taxation is evolved in consequence, and is regarded by the authorities as equivalent to landing charges, wharfage, transit dues, etc. The mandarins, therefore, in imitation of foreign municipalities, multiply *likin* stations until native trade and industry are almost strangled. The tea trade has suffered terribly, and is fast diminishing now that Europeans have been educated to relish the flavour and taste of the less aromatic Ceylon tea. The tax on tea is computed to be about twenty-five per cent. on the cost of production, if not sometimes more. Even in this the foreigner enjoys a remarkable immunity. Tea bought by a foreigner may go out of China by payment of the minimum tax as fixed by treaty. In other words, native products bought by a foreigner are entitled to exemption as if they were foreign products. On the other hand, foreign goods, when passed out of foreign hands and sold to natives, still remain foreign, so far as tax exemption is concerned. This is, of course, quite anomalous and unjustifiable, and is a very sore point with all the Chinese traders.

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* An inland excise on goods.—ED.

Natives recognise the great advantages gained by foreigners under the treaties. Therefore great numbers have naturalised themselves as foreign subjects. Many more presume on the ignorance of the people and the officials, to arrogate to themselves all the privileges enjoyed by foreign subjects, by declaring themselves to be such. Land bought by a foreign subject of Chinese race passes out of the control of the Chinese land-officer, and the writer knows of many acres of land in a district near Amoy which have remained free from land-tax ever since they were purchased by a Chinese who was a subject of a foreign power. The Chinese mandarins can hardly be expected to look upon this with unconcern. But they are powerless to do anything, for fear of attracting the attention of superior officers, because on the slightest pretext they may be dismissed by their chiefs.

While Europeans adopt the farming of taxes on special commodities, they refuse the Chinese the same right to obtain the best income they can ; because, naturally, the farmers will tend to increase the tax. The foreigners bring into operation the laws of the limited liability company, which powerfully competes against native enterprise. This has resulted in the formation of native guilds. At all events, the commercial inequalities of the native and the foreigner are ever causing differences and resentment, and these must lead to complications of all sorts.

2. The communal rights and customs of the Chinese are as old as the hills. They have practically never been tampered with in historic times. One dynasty after another came and went, satisfied with the glory of Imperial power, and with the tribute money from the provincial authorities. The people were not molested, nor were they called upon to sacrifice one whit of their ancient possessions. They had to pay taxes, which they gladly did. Even the Manchus have no hold in China proper. Forbidden to hold land, to engage in agriculture

and in business, they really have no contact with the people. Hence their presence has been tolerated, and they have so degenerated that, without foreign aid, they must soon succumb to the Chinese insurgents.

The customs and ideas of the innumerable townships differ as widely as the distances which separate them. No definite hard-and-fast regulation will suit them all. A sweeping clause in a treaty may suit the port of a particular district, and yet prove most undesirable in respect of a hundred others.

The vested interests in a community are manifold. Whole communities, for example, are exempted from salt tax, in certain places, especially in the south, for meritorious deeds of the inhabitants at some previous time. Naturally these privileged people will resent being compelled to lose their heritage without compensation, in case their land is leased to foreigners by the Pekin Government. The public, or semi-public enterprise, carried on by associations and guilds, is looked after by men who are very sensitive as to their rights, and who are prepared to sacrifice their all to preserve intact the conditions under which, from generation to generation, their people have carried on their profession. The transportation of rice is an example of a huge semi-public service, in which a great number of people are deeply interested. Any attempt to interfere with this without deliberate consideration, especially of the question of compensation, must entail very serious opposition, and must lead to violence. Kang Yu Wei's petition to have the inland transportation of rice abolished, without an explicit scheme for fully compensating the persons concerned in the traffic, has probably contributed not a little to his downfall.

Internal navigation impinges at once upon ten thousand native vested interests. The treaties, as already pointed out, do not provide compensation for these. The fear of encroachments compels the people to object, while the dread of insurrection, the only measure left to the oppressed people, keeps the mandarin in that unhappy position described as between the devil and the deep sea.

The land question is frequently a source of much heart-burning. The treaties provide that the natives are to be properly paid for land taken from them, but the wretched mandarins have often quietly acquired properties known by them to be required by the foreigners. Then the officials dispose of the land to the latter at a profit, and if troubles arise the mandarins leave the native and the foreigners at loggerheads. In any way, the people suffer. To whom are they to appeal?

*Feng-shui** superstitions must be considered from the native standpoint. It is sometimes thought that the patron deity of a city resides in a particular hill. Desecration of the locality, it is firmly believed, will lead to a great calamity of some kind. *Feng-shui*, moreover, has to be accounted for in building houses, laying drains, and, in fact, in all human interferences with the earth's surface.

Just as in former times people were persecuted in England for being witches, and for being in communication with the devil, and the matter was regarded in such a serious light that those convicted were burnt to death, so in modern China geomantic ideas still have a powerful hold over the people. And until they are overcome by the gospel of science the superstitions of the millions must be treated by strangers with becoming respect, if they wish to dwell in peace among a people who consider their presence as a most objectionable intrusion. When it is remembered that civil suits in respect of interference with *Feng-shui* are quite common, and that Chinese magistrates award heavy compensation to the aggrieved, it will, perhaps, be seen why the exemption of foreigners and their *protégés* has been so provoking to the aggrieved natives.

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* *Vide* note on p. 25, and p. 292.

The removal of graves is another of those great matters which deeply wound the feelings of the Chinese. Nothing on earth is so sacred to the Chinese as the grave of a deceased ancestor. Rightly or wrongly, these people believe that their parents are the visible representatives of that great eternal source of life whom the Christians call God, and who, in the language of the classics, is *the Supreme One above.* Their parents are the true evangelists, and hence piety is made the basis of morals. Interference with the graves of the dead becomes a great offence in the eyes of the moralist and the scholar. The light-hearted manner displayed by foreigners in their treatment of this question has disgusted the Chinese, and has probably engendered in Mongolian breasts feelings of aversion and pity, which are perhaps reciprocated by not a few foreigners.

3. The religious and social aspects of the problem now before us require a volume for their adequate discussion. We shall not

venture to discuss the endless objections which the natives have raised against the teaching of the missionaries, nor need we dilate on the absurdity of introducing into China a great number of contending sects, who not only confound the cause of Christianity, but also sow the seed of a future civil war between the native converts. But we must emphasise the fact that the religion of the Europeans means something more than what the Chinese understand by that name. The missionary starts a new community wherever he plants a chapel. Chistians are called *Chiao min*, literally "religion subjects," an expression used by Chinese mandarins to distinguish converts from the native subjects of the Emperor. The position of the missionary requires reconsideration, otherwise there will be no cessation of troubles, so long as there are heathens who still refuse to join the plausible strangers, and as long as the Imperial Government is unable to make its power felt in the villages.

Native Christians are beginning to complain of the domination of the European teachers. Some of the missionaries are not liked by the people. Some lack the qualifications which generally adorn the character of the minister of religion. Not all missionaries are either sensible or sober. Yet the native Christians, being very poor, have to put up with anyone sent to them, and must subscribe to creeds originally framed to suit another race and another civilisation. The Europeans, from sectarian motives, have not encouraged any independence of thought among the native converts, and as far as the religion of these people is concerned, they have scarcely reached the stage of the Christians of the Middle Ages. All the results of modern exegesis and all the labours of scientific Hebraists are *tabu* in the churches of China. Fearing that the inflow of light might reveal too much, Christianity is still taught to this highly intellectual people in the form of fairy tales; and the only thing which will save this nation is rigidly excluded from the curriculum of studies among native Christians. Scientific philosophy is the one talisman which will dissolve native superstitions into nothingness; but scientific philosophy means impartial and fearless inquiry, which breathes too much of the spirit of a Savonarola, of a Colenso, or of a Darwin, to be acceptable to the missionaries.

A greater evil is perhaps the mutual contempt in which the converts of different sects regard one another. There is no real feeling of love or charity between the worshippers of Jesus (Protestants) and the worshippers of the Lord of Heaven (Catholics). The enmity between the missionaries is perhaps less edifying. Meanwhile the heathens can neither make head nor tail of the peculiar intestine dissensions which rend these sects asunder.

In some places native Christians make over real property to a missionary for the use of the Church. In doing so he practically overlooks all the vested and other rights of the Chinese Crown, and of his own descendants and kinsmen according to Chinese ideas. Very often the peculiar family rights are not considered at the time. After changes of missionaries, the Church will claim the land absolutely, and disputes at once spring up between converts and their non-christian kinsmen. Not unfrequently from such a little family squabble a great whirlwind is raised, involving the whole Christain community and the village.

Missionaries have been known to alter native bequests. In one recent case a hostel for native Christians, erected by subscription among the natives is in process of time changed into a "House of God," and poor Christians who need a night's lodging must find a resting-place under the broad expanse of an inclement sky.

There are many reasons why the people look with extreme disfavour on the Christian religion. It is commonly felt that the converts are led and driven by the foreign priests. Practical inconvenience and many hardships often result as the consequences of a Chinese becoming a Christian. If a man has two concubines and then wishes to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, he has first to dissolve his lawful (from the native point of view) and happy union, for otherwise the foreigners will not receive him. Or a young man already betrothed has his head turned by the foreign religion. He is admitted in due time, and then the friends of the maiden to whom he has been engaged will be irritated by learning that through the foreign priest the intended marriage becomes impossible, and is, in fact, cancelled. In ordinary course Chinese law allows heavy heavy damages for breach of promise, and the bridegroom's party may be liable to punishment. But the Christian takes advantage of the missionary's influence, and neither mandarin nor the aggrieved people can touch him, for the foreign protector at once reports to his consul: "A native who is very devoted to the Church is being persecuted because he refuses to give contributions towards expenses connected with idolatrous worship." This is what we hear almost every day. Yet it does not require very much acquaintance with the habits of the Chinese to know that persecution for not joining in idolatrous worship is a pure invention of native Christians. It is a vague and roguish cover for many sins, and it is a remarkably successful dodge for evading the payment of just liabilities. These social anomalies and continuous petty injustices combine to aggravate the people's indignation against a sect which teaches selfishness as the salvation of the individual against the ancient family altruism—the harmony of the family. The Buddhist priests are held in great contempt, because they really live and work on the lines which Buddha and Jesus enjoined on their disciples.* The Chinese hold the family to be so fundamental an institution that they are very suspicious of a religion which anticipates as one of the consequences of its progress that "brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death." It may confidently be said that the Christian religion, maintained at such a great cost in China, will tumble to pieces the moment political advantages are dissociated from the Church. This is seen in the fact that as soon as a foreign teacher or missionary is taken away the Church languishes. Instead of seeing the true reason for this, many a missionary tries to discover inherent defects in the native character. Such a discovery, doubtless, enhances the missionary's own importance, and makes the money-giver at home in Europe more willing to contribute towards the uprooting of ancient faiths.

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* Matthew x. 7-14.

It must be confessed that the lot of the Chinese peasant is a very hard one. By becoming a Christian he has a church to fall back upon, and, what is of greater consequence, a foreigner who will do his utmost to save him from oppression. One cannot therefore wonder that Christianity spreads. It must also be obvious that many bad characters would try their best to get the protection of the Church, and it is to be feared that too many have succeeded in becoming Church members in spite of the precaution taken by many Protestant missionaries to prevent such an occurrence. It is idle to overlook the advantages which connection with a Church gives to the Chinese. Injustice and corruption have been the normal state of the land. Nobody expects to get off without money or influence in any legal proceedings.

The fact that therefore many Christians have been helped by missionaries to obtain justice according to the laws of the land is sufficient excuse for the ignorant to hate missionaries. Moreover, it has frequently been urged that the Roman Catholic priests have openly helped their converts in their lawsuits and in various other ways. Of course, the position of the missionary is a very trying one. With the best of intentions and the purest of motives the missionary is undoubtedly bound to look after the interests of those who seemingly have incurred the hostility of their kinsmen simply on account of their religion. A mob is then incited against the Christians primarily concerned, and in the ensuing scuffle the whole village becomes involved, and, it may be, the missionary is killed or seriously injured. The results are terrible, not only to those implicated in the mob, but to all in the village. A couple may lose their heads, but all are "squeezed" to pay the compensation required to indemnify the missionary's friends and the native Christians, as well as to rebuild the chapels and other buildings.

It is safe to say that in every anti-christian riot the consequence is that a large number of innocent folks have to suffer in consequence of the misdeeds of bad characters. In other cases the mandarins secretly encourage or connive at the persecution of the Christians, but the results to the people are the same. All the troubles are due to the injustice of the Government officials. When we get honest magistrates, who treat Christians and non-christians alike, we seldom hear of trouble. Whenever an official is coerced to do his duty then he resorts to the suicidal policy of encouraging the reckless and turbulent elements to wreak their vengeance on the Christians.

It was this mode of procedure that led to the murder of the German missionaries near Kiaochau, an incident which resulted in the cession of that department of Shantung to Germany and the removal of Li Peng Heng from the Governorship of the province. It is questionable whether the foreign Powers have ever given the missionary problem their serious attention. The method adopted by Germany was really the first of a series of actions on the part of the foreign Powers which excited the indignation of the people. It was felt that an injustice had been done. The inhabitants of Kiaochau complained of the increase of taxation, and fear and discontent spread throughout the province of Shantung. Officials who are at all weak become exceedingly subservient to the missionaries, as they have been thoroughly cowed by the fate of Li Peng Heng. The more reckless mandarins abated their hostility, but the hatred against the Christians smouldered on. The Roman Catholic missionaries clamoured for official status, and, after considerable delay, got what they wanted, thus increasing the discontent of the non-christians. We do not blame the missionaries for all the trouble laid at their door, but we state emphatically that a good deal of the friction between the people and foreigners arose originally from real or imaginary grievances against the missionaries and the native Christians.

It is only natural that the spread of Christianity should inevitably clash with the time-honoured beliefs of the Chinese. The doctrine of *Feng-shui*, and the worship of ancestors, stand in the way of Christianity, and the defiant attitude of native Christians has been a source of suffering to their relatives and of annoyance to their neighbours. In self-defence many families feel constrained to join any association which endeavours to undo the work of the missionaries. Let Europeans imagine a parallel case, of Buddhist or Confucian missionaries working in London or Paris, the Christian Church and all her doctrines condemned as the most baneful creations of the devil, and all the time-honoured customs of the French and English peoples interdicted! Would anyone guarantee that no mob would rise against such Mongolian intruders?

Yet the case of the Chinese is not the same as that of a modern European. The life of a Chinese is made up of a continuous train of ceremonies from his very birth to the moment of his death, and, indeed, for some time thereafter. It is no doubt a great blessing that the Chinese should be taught to give these up. Without them life surely might be happier, at least much more economical. However, the facts remain. As soon as a man becomes a Christian he really ceases to be a Chinaman, from the native point of view. He literally becomes an outcast of his own choice, and his self-isolation is every bit as complete as that of the degraded Hindu, rejected by the stern rules of caste in India. Parents in China have the same passions as parents elsewhere; indeed it may be questioned whether anywhere else parents feel so much the estrangement of their sons from the ancient faith. When young people join the Church they have to give up all the ceremonies connected with the funeral of their parents and with ancestral worship. No wonder that the older Chinese detest the Christian religion and hate the missionaries! Further, the subjects of foreign Powers enjoy greater privileges than natives—hence the great demand for naturalisation. In fact, the laws are inadequate and unsuitable, and the incidence of taxation is heavier on natives than on foreigners. In almost everything the unfortunate Chinaman finds himself handicapped and restrained by his own country's laws and customs, while the foreigner is free from any sort of restriction.

These diverse considerations will show the main complaints which the Chinese make against foreign aggression. The unity of all foreigners against the Chinese compels the latter to yield to none, until driven and compelled by force. The dangers which the White Man's presence involve are more terrible than those of the Yellow Peril. The Chinese have competed with the Christian nations with their native industry, their inborn frugality, their dogged perseverance, and their simple habits; and for these really great virtues, begotten of the *res angustæ domi*, the unfortunate Chinese have been made the objects of calumny and ridicule, and have been shut out from places where they could seriously compete with white labourers. On the other hand, the Christian nations force upon the unwilling Chinese the acceptance of the Christian missionary and his patronising impudence (from the native view), impress upon the nation an unfair tariff, compel the Imperial Government to protect foreign enterprise to the detriment of native commerce, and support the tyrannous Manchus against the Chinese, who are struggling to free themselves from the intolerable yoke already borne so long by them. The Chinese demand their right to have their grievances redressed by the Government, and failing to obtain a hearing, they will, in accordance with the precepts of the sages, rise against the powers that be.

We must now conclude. The only further remark to be made is that the Allies have at present a rare opportunity of settling on a firm basis the relation between foreigners and

Chinese. If independence is to be granted to the Chinese Empire, then let one Power be deputed to prop it up on sound principles. Preferably, England should be that Power, eligible alike on account of her vast experience and on account of the undisputed success of her policy in Egypt. Otherwise let the Allies fight the Manchus to the bitter end. Let them remove the dynasty and proclaim a new government by the people themselves, after consultation with the friendly viceroys, the *literati*, and the reformers. The Chinese fully understand the principles of representative government, and with the aid of foreign Powers, a constitutional oligarchy, elected by the officials and the *literati*, with proper safeguards for the eventual enfranchisement of the people generally, will tend more towards peace than the attempt to patch up the present ruptures between foreigners and Chinese, and between the reformers and the reactionaries. The Chinese problem calls for a satisfactory solution, and until it is settled there will be no peace in the Far East, and perhaps also no peace in the world.

A Chinese tradition says that "when the Central Kingdom shall be broken up, the whole earth will be involved in her collapse." The events of the last few months do not augur well either for future peace or for the speedy coming of the happy time—

> " That man to man the world o'er
> Shall brothers be for a' that."

APPENDIX

MEMBERS OF THE TSUNGLI YAMEN

THE following biographical notices deal with some of the men who recently served in the Tsungli Yamen—especially those in office from 1898 to the outbreak in June, 1900. The career of Prince Ching, for many years the President of the Board, will naturally require our first consideration, while of the rest only sketches must suffice. To Prince Kung* sufficient reference has been made in the chapters on the Dowager-Empress.

I

PRINCE CHING

Prince Ching is a cousin of the late Prince Kung, and is therefore a member of the Imperial clan. His proper name is Yi Kwang, but he is generally known by his princely title of *Ching Ch'in Wang*, Ching, Hereditary Prince of the First Order. He passed through the usual course of studies appointed for princes, and acquired a competent knowledge of the Chinese language. He commenced life as a hereditary duke, and held the honorary rank of *pei-la*. The Chinese system of hereditary nobility is quite peculiar. A *pei-la* is a son of a hereditary prince two generations removed from the reigning sovereign, and the son of a *pei-la* is no longer a prince. There is thus a strict limitation of the number of princes, and a useful check is provided against the increase of these troublesome magnates. As a minister of the Imperial Household, the *pei-la* was distinguished for the assiduous manner in which he performed his duties, and the Empress-Dowager conferred upon him the insignia of the Second Order of a hereditary prince. His family was comparatively poor, but the prince has since made good this only want from which he suffered, although his rise to affluence has been somewhat slow.

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* *Vide ante*, chaps. v.-vii.

On the retirement of Prince Kung the Prince Ching was promoted to fill the vacant post of President of the Tsungli Yamen. From that time his prosperity commenced, and complicated concessions, which made the country poorer, seem to have increased his wealth. He did not cease to take a great interest in the affairs of the palace. Fighting the foreign ministers in many a diplomatic tussle did not abate in him a whit of the energy with which he discharged his duties towards the great dispenser of benefices in the Forbidden City. The great Lady never forgets either her friends or her enemies. The Prince was again promoted, and this time he was made a Hereditary Prince of the First Order, an honour so rare that from the foundation of the dynasty there had been only eight precedents. With these exceptions, Princes of the First Order must be sons of emperors. The elevation of Prince Ching was naturally not popular among the great princes, who considered that their privileges had been usurped; for Prince Ching had achieved nothing very remarkable, whereas the former recipients of the extraordinary honour had been awarded it for "meritorious services" to the Empire.

Besides other important honorary appointments, Prince Ching enjoyed the right of private audience, and was the most powerful man in the palace. He knew that he held a position of very great importance, much coveted by the highest Manchus, and he was sensible enough to understand that he was hated by the immediate relatives of the Emperor. On his part, he spared no efforts to restrict their intercourse with the Emperor as much as possible. Prince Ching was most active in watching the movements of Po Lun and Po Thung, grandsons of Tao Kuang, and kept a no less watchful eye on the Duke Chai Chok, a grandson of the Emperor Kia King. These were liberal-minded princes, who were neither fools nor idiots, but they were quite at the mercy of the Empress-Dowager. When a couple of the Imperial princes requested to be sent abroad to study the military science of the West, Prince Ching put every obstacle in their way, and hindered as much as he openly dared the intercourse between Kuang Hsu and his cousins.

Prince Ching identified himself with Li Lien Ying, and together they carried through the wild schemes of Tzu Hsi in palace-building, and they were restrained only by the utter collapse of the Treasury consequent on the disastrous war with Japan. Disliked by the Emperor and confronted with the conditions of the peace contracted by Li Hung Chang, Prince Ching was obliged to stop further expenditure on the palaces. His difficulty was the opportunity of his rivals; and Yung-lu somehow managed to get the ear of Li Lien Ying, and intrigued with the latter to overthrow the Prince. In the first place, Prince Ching did not succeed Prince Kung in the high post of President of the Grand Council when the old man died; and in the second place, he was partially disgraced by a cordon of soldiers being placed around his residence. Charges of fraud and peculation in connection with the loans raised to pay off the Japanese indemnity were brought against him. But Yung-lu *publicly* interceded on behalf of the Prince, pointing out the public services he had rendered. Though Prince Ching was pardoned, the Empress-Dowager seems to have lost her former trust in him, and she has since been rather cold and indifferent towards him.

The scarcely concealed enmity of the great mandarins is well shown by the manner in which the most important post in the Empire is made, as it were, a question of party politics; that is, of self-interest. Prince Li is a well-known Prince of the First Order, distinguished as a poet, and a scholar of the highest eminence. He succeeded Prince Kung in 1884 as President of the Grand Council, but he was no statesman, and his work in the Grand Council was relegated to the notorious Sun Yu Wen, the cleverest Chinaman in Pekin, a Member of the Council, and the most astute politician among the mandarins of the Empire. He was the first preacher of a Russophile policy in Pekin, and was the most un-scrupulous squeezer in the Council. But after the Kiaochau affair Prince Li feigned madness, and resigned. Prince Kung returned to power, but died in the spring of 1898. Yung-lu feared that the Empress would appoint Prince Ching to the Presidentship of the Council, and therefore urged upon her the claims of Prince Li. Consequently this gentleman was again pushed into the chair of the Grand Council, although he resigned not long before on the plea of insanity. Prince Li was a mere puppet in the hands of Yung-lu, and as the President of the Council could in a measure control the Tsungli Yamen, Yung-lu's influence was greatly increased by the appointment of his relative, the Prince Li, and he thus secured a decided advantage over his rival.

Prince Ching, however, did not suspect Yung-lu's intrigue, and was known to have thanked him for having saved his life by his active mediation. This duplicity has been a notable feature in Yung-lu's character, even till the time of the onslaught on the legations; for while he was actually leading his soldiers against the unfortunate foreigners, he had caused reports to be circulated that he was defending them. However, Prince Ching was deceived, although the intrigue of Yung-lu was known to the minor officials of Pekin.

After the *coup d'état* Prince Ching joined the party of Yung-lu, but his friend Chang Yin Huan was impeached, degraded, and sentenced to death. Prince Ching did all in his power to help old Chang, but his efforts succeeded only in postponing the day of execution. The power of Yung-lu rose rapidly, and as Prince Ching discovered that he was virtually being superseded, ill feeling developed, and the two friends were soon estranged. Prince Ching commissioned the notorious lottery-banker, Lin Hsio Hsun, to work upon Li Hsun To, the Chinese Minister at Tokio, the well-known friend of Yung-lu, with the view of splitting up the party of Conservatives.

The cause of the growing difference was not well known. It was a sufficient reason, however, to make an ambitious man resort to extreme measures. When the Empress-Dowager was looking about for an heir to her late husband, the Emperor Hsien-Feng, she first thought of Prince Ching's son, but through the protests and objections of Yung-lu her choice ultimately fell upon the son of Prince Tuan. Hence the enmity and the strife said to have existed between the two parties of reactionaries. When Prince Ching found there was no hope for his son he calmly decided, with all the assurance of a scientist watching the operations of a well-known experiment, to help Prince Tuan to distinction by encouraging him to play with the fire of Boxer organisation. Prince Ching had no doubt that the Boxers would utterly ruin Prince Tuan, and would make an end of the claims of his son. The varying attitudes of Prince Ching will appear intelligible enough when we keep in mind this important fact. But Prince Ching should be held responsible for all the crimes and excesses of the Pekin soldiers, for he was Commander-in-Chief of the Pekin Field Force, and could have put a stop to the troubles if he had chosen. Not long before Li Lien Ying died* Yung-lu had a scene with his patron the eunuch, and in consequence, slapped Li on the face. Yung-lu suffered for this affront to the Empress-Dowager's favourite, and an edict soon ordered the retirement of two of his henchmen. Prince Ching again came to the front, and in March openly attacked Yung-lu in the Grand Council, actively siding with Prince Tuan in affirming that the Manchu forces were competent to hold their own against the world. Yung-lu had his doubts, and suffered consequently both in prestige and in the estimation of the haughty Manchus. In the Tsungli Yamen Prince Ching seems to have indicated his personal anxiety to put an end to the troubles, and to have impressed Sir Claude Macdonald with the idea of his own innocence. However, he made it clear that the Yamen had no prospects of making themselves heard at Court; in other words, he hinted that Prince Tuan, who was in the last week of June the all-powerful man, would not listen to the advice of the Yamen. Keep this in mind, and recall the incident of Prince Tuan's son being preferred after his own had been spoken of by the Empress-Dowager, and then, perhaps, many people may be able to grasp the cunning and subtlety of Prince Ching, the ostensible friend of the foreigners.

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* *Vide* note on p. 158.

II

PRINCE TUAN, NA T'UNG, HSU HUI LI, AND CHI SIU

Prince Tuan joined the Tsungli Yamen just about a week before the bombardment of Tientsin. When the troubles in Pekin reached their climax he was virtually in the position of a dictator, and was therefore the head of the Tsungli Yamen. Prince Ching had somehow or other been set aside, but already there was nothing more for the Tsungli Yamen to do. Two mutes joined the Yamen on the same date as Prince Tuan, and their names are Na T'ung and Chi Siu.

Chi Siu is a Manchu who had held various subordinate posts in the metropolis, and rising to the Presidentship of the Board of Rites, had gained distinction as a scholar by his admission to the Hanlin College.* As a Minister of the Household he had many opportunities of seeing the old Empress-Dowager; and as he was no politician or statesman, he threw in his lot with the party of Kang-Yi and Prince Tuan.

Na T'ung is a Mongol who came into prominence after the *coup d'état*, and suddenly leapt into high places through the services of Li Lien Ying. At the last moment this man seems to have changed his opinion about the Boxers, but he had little or no influence, and there was no more time for discussion.

Hsu Hui Li was another of those who were put into the Tsungli Yamen in June, 1900. He is a Hanlin, but he was before this appointment President of the Board of Works. His only merit seems to have been his truckling to the schemes of Prince Tuan.

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* *Vide* note on p. 130.

Appendix

III

WENG TUNG HO AND LIAO HSIAO HENG

Weng Tung ho, late tutor to the Emperor Kuang Hsu, has been mentioned more than once. He is, of course, one of the greatest scholars in China, and had been a great Conservative. But the crushing defeat of the Chinese knocked off completely the chauvinism which hitherto had hung as a veil over his powerful intellect. He found inspiration in the writings of Kang Yu Wei, and resolved personally to act as a leader in the cause of reform. But as we have seen, he was out-manœuvred by Kang-Yi, and before his plans had been considered, he was cashiered by order of the Empress-Dowager and banished to his home. Before he left the Court, however, he urged upon his august pupil the claims of the "Modern Sage of Canton."

Liao Hsiao Heng was probably one of the most upright men in the Tsungli Yamen. A native of Kansu, he entered the Civil Service in the usual course, and gained a reputation as a scholar and an honest official. In the capacity of provincial examiner, he came in touch with the *literati* and the people. His merits did not escape the notice of Weng Tung Ho. And through the latter's recommendation Liao was promoted to a post in the metropolis, where he soon became President of one of the Boards. His appointment to the Tsungli Yamen soon followed. Naturally he was a supporter of Weng Tung Ho. When Kiaochau had been snatched by Germany, Kang Yu Wei wrote a memorandum recommending the opening of all the ports of China to the world's commerce. Weng Tung Ho and Liao Hsiao Heng brought this proposal into the Tsungli Yamen, but Prince Ching and Yung-lu at once nipped it in the bud. During the early days of the reform agitation in Pekin Liao was the benefactor and patron of the reformers, always giving the authority of his great name to their proposals. But he soon discovered the cabal of Manchus under Yung-lu, and he suddenly held aloof from the party of Kang Yu Wei. He said nothing henceforth, in favour of, but neither did he do anything against his former friends, merely to please the clique who then had the ears of the Empress-Dowager. Consequently, when the storm arose and swept away the Emperor and his reformers, Liao Hsiao Heng remained the only vestige of the renaissance, not a turn-coat like the famous Chang Chi Tung, but a helpless nonentity like "a fish out of water." In fact, his days of usefulness were over; and he only prolonged his tenure of office for a short time. When Prince Tuan revived the persecution of reformers Weng Tung Ho was impeached and sentenced to decapitation. It was then that Liao Hsiao Heng showed the stuff that was in him. Once more he wrote and spoke. His eloquence, his earnestness, and his honesty saved the life of his former colleague, but ruined his own prospects and jeopardised his own head. The heroism of men like him affords us the surest hope that, under happier auspices, a stable and good government in China is not impossible. But to return to Liao Hsiao Heng. He became a marked man, and the Manchus were only watching for a pretext to dismiss him. This they soon found. Liao Hsiao Heng strongly objected to the liberty and patronage accorded to the Boxers, and in powerful language urged the suppression of this seditious propaganda; but because his logic was incontrovertible, Prince Ching and Yung-lu secured his dismissal from the Tsungli Yamen. When he left the Yamen was stripped of the last member who dared to raise his voice in protest against the caitiff machinations of Kang-Yi and his friends.

IV

CHAO SHU CH'IAO

Passing from Liao Hsiao Heng to Chao Shu Ch'iao is to move from one extreme to the other. Chao was born in Shansi, but after graduating at Hanlin, he had a distinguished career in the province of Chekiang, where he rose from the magistrate's bench to be successively taotai, judge, and provincial treasurer. After the China-Japan War, he was promoted to the governorship of Kiang-su. When a railway scheme was proposed by Weng Tung Ho, backed by the Emperor, not long after the peace with Japan, Chao, whose province was concerned, strongly objected, and won both his case and the favours of Yung-lu and Prince Ching. He was therefore promoted to be Vice-President, and afterwards President, of the Board of Punishment, and found a seat in the Tsungli Yamen. By this time it must be quite clear that the *junta* of Manchus possessed absolute power to crush any possible opponent in the official world. By securing the Presidentship of the Board of Punishment, or the Ministry of Justice, for one of their creatures, they provided one of the surest devices to intimidate their enemies, or to inflict upon them whatsoever penalty they might choose. In Chao Shu Ch'iao they discovered an out-and-out Conservative, who detested the very name of reformer or "the new party," and loathed the Christianising policy of His Majesty the Emperor. Despite missionary disclaimers, it must be noted that the Conservatives charged the reformers with being Christians, and spread the report that the Emperor was already a Christian at heart. Chao Shu Ch'iao had opposed the reformers' railway scheme, but he and his superiors were obliged to yield to the foreigners, who obtained a concession to carry out an almost identical railway scheme, and this was, no doubt, one powerful factor in inciting Chao against reformers and foreigners. In this connection it is pertinent to point out that the Conservatives think that all foreigners are Christians, and that Christianity and western culture are inseparable. Hence the attempt made in some quarters to say that the Chinese troubles are anti-foreign, rather than anti-christian, is needless hair-splitting and misleading, for as far as the Chinese are concerned, it is making a distinction without a difference. In the foregoing chapters the attitude of the Manchus has been styled anti-foreign, and, amongst a certain class of Europeans, the love of foreign learning, manifested by the reformers, has been seized hold of as one of the causes of the anti-foreign feeling. Without a doubt, the crisis of 1898 is partly responsible for increasing the hatred of the Manchus against foreigners, that is to say against Christians. Be that as it may, Chao Shu Ch'iao was much admired, and when a vacancy occurred he duly had a seat in the Grand Council of the Empire. Among his plans are:—The deposition of H.M. the Emperor for the safety of the realm, the closing of all schools for foreign learning, beginning with the Pekin University, and abolition of the Tsungli Yamen. It will be seen that this man is a disciple of Kang-Yi, and as such the Allies must be warned not to treat with him in any capacity, for in justice he must be included among those to be punished for the crime of instigating the Boxers. Along with another official, he was commissioned to treat with the Boxers when they arrived in the vicinity of Pekin, but in reality Chao Shu Ch'iao met Kang-Yi, who had gone outside the city *incognito*, and they held a conclave with the Boxer chiefs, and urged upon them fidelity to the cause of Prince Tuan. Chao Shu Ch'iao returned to the Court and reported that there was no trouble, and that the Boxers were patriotic keepers of the peace. Recently it was reported that Chao had been appointed to examine the proceedings of Liu Kun-Yi, the viceroy of Nankin. This was the last we heard of him, and it is not at all unlikely that the discomfited reactionaries may yet employ this hater of innovation as one of the peace negotiators, should the Allies object—as they ought—to Yung-lu being made a party in the peace parleyings.

Appendix

V

WANG WEN SHAO

Wang Wen Shao is a man of whom perhaps we have not yet heard the last. He is a native of Chekiang and has a great reputation as a scholar, having long ago won the laurels of the Hanlin Academy. He had gone through the regular stages of Chinese official life, and was some time Governor of Hunan. Years ago he was in charge of the commissariat for the army of Tso Tsung Tang, operating against the rebel states in Turkestan. He seems to have done his duty to the satisfaction of all concerned, and when Tso came back to Pekin as the conquering hero he did not forget his commissariat officer; and Wang found himself all at once a member of the Cabinet and of the Grand Council. But he was afterwards charged with bribery, and was dismissed. He did not remain long out of office, for he soon obtained a high appointment as the viceroy of Yun Kwei. Then he was viceroy of Chih-li until he had to make way for the traitor Yung-lu. When Weng Tung Ho was dismissed from the Tsungli Yamen, and turned out of the Grand Council, Wang succeeded him in both capacities. Wang Wen Shao is a good type of the high-class mandarins, who combine in their character some of the highest gifts, and also not a few of the meanest traits, of politicians. A man of solid learning and undoubted ability, he in his younger days displayed marvellous powers of organisation, but he has all along been a wretched time-server; and even now in his old age he is a veritable Vicar of Bray. The Emperor had the wisdom to ascertain his views of reform, but Wang knew too well that poor Kuang Hsu was a helpless amateur, and gave his answer accordingly. He could not be said to be friendly to the reactionaries; he was too wise for that. All he wanted was to retain his post and his emoluments, and in this he has succeeded well. When the fate of Weng Tung Ho was trembling in the balance Wang mildly sided with the indignant Liao Hsiao Heng, but did not go out of his way to attack the corruption and evil works of the Manchu clique; and consequently has stuck to his post like a leech.

VI

HSÜ CHENG CHENG AND YUAN CH'ANG

These two men, Hsü Cheng Cheng and Yuan Ch'ang, were natives of Chekiang, passed the metropolitan degree of Doctor, rose to fame and power, and fell victims together to the horrible cruelty of the Manchus. They were both well read in the newer literature of China, and their heroic action, the cause of their destruction, shows that they had imbibed not a little of the spirit of patriotism, justice, and liberty which characterise the new works translated from foreign tongues.

Hsü Cheng Cheng had the advantage of having travelled abroad. As the Chinese Minister to

Germany and Russia, he resided about ten years in Europe, and when he returned to China, Chang Yin Huan, who represented H.M. Kuang Hsu at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration in London, was in great trouble on account of his intimacy with Kang Yu Wei. Beside, at that time, as the whole world knows, except perhaps certain magnates in Pekin, the Chinese Government, under the influence of Li Hung Chang, was playing into the hands of Russia. The reform movement was associated with the Cantonese, the avowed friends of the English; and Chang Yin Huan had been specially honoured by the Queen of Great Britain. As a counter-stroke Chang Yin Huan was banished, and the newly returned Hsü, fresh from the atmosphere of St. Petersburg, was made to succeed him. Yung-lu and Kang-Yi had some idea of asking for Russian assistance, and, *à propos* of this, Russia was to be courted in every way. Hsü Cheng Cheng was naturally a Russophile, and co-operated with the Manchus quite heartily. He became a director of the Eastern Railway and Mining syndicate, but beyond approving of the Russophile policy, he minded his own business and left the Manchus to work their own destruction.

Yuan Ch'ang, on the other hand, had been shifting his political standpoint to suit the times. As a taotai at Wa Hu, during the prosperous days of Kuang Hsu, he offered the Emperor a certain scheme of reforms. The Emperor was delighted, and appointed him to a metropolitan post, requesting him to go up to Pekin without delay. But when the sky became cloudy Yuan Ch'ang changed his plans and went over to Yung-lu, with the result that, when

Kuang Hsu fell, and the reformers suffered, Yuan Ch'ang was elevated to a seat in the Tsungli Yamen, in which he had worked well during those eighteen months to serve the interests of his masters.

But when the Manchus ordered the troops to attack the legations these two men would go with them no more. Along with the Emperor, they besought the cruel Yehonala to refuse her assent to the secret edict which gave *carte blanche* to Tung Fu-hsiang and other military officers to accomplish the massacre of all foreigners and of their sympathisers and friends. Their prayers were met with disdain and contempt, but they memorialised in the strongest language possible the iniquity of attacking the foreign legations. There is no doubt that their vigorous and disinterested appeal disconcerted not a little the plans of the wicked Tzu Hsi. The Manchus hesitated until the great hater of foreigners, Li Peng Heng, arrived in Pekin. This scoundrel spoke of great things he was going to do against the Allied Army, then actually preparing to start from Tientsin, and determined in the first instance to make a holocaust of all those officials who had the impudence and temerity to speak a friendly word on behalf of foreigners. The Manchus regained their confidence in their cause, and renewed with greater spleen their efforts to annihilate the foreigners. The unfortunate Hsü Cheng Cheng and Yuan Ch'ang must be severely punished as a warning to other Chinese, and were therefore cut across the middle with an enormous lever knife—the *Hu T'ou Cha*—an obsolete instrument for inflicting death in exceptional cases of crime.

VII

WU TIN FAN

Wu Tin Fan is a native of Anhui. He graduated as Doctor in Pekin, and was during many years a secretary of the Tsungli Yamen. After the *coup d'état* of 1898 he was raised to a seat in the Yamen, but he never dared to do anything, always being on the side of the stronger party for the time being.

VIII

TSUNGLI, KWEI CHUN, AND LIEN YUAN

These three are all the creatures of Yung-lu, and are Manchus. Kwei Chun and Lien Yuan were servants of Yung-lu in their youth, and as their master rose in fortune and influence, they too got a share of the good things that he was able to dispense. Kwei Chun became the taotai of Honan, and Lien Yuan the taotai of Kwang Tung, and they both managed to scrape together a small fortune for the benefit of Yung-lu and Li Lien Ying. After the virtual deposition of Kuang Hsu, Yung-lu placed them both in the Tsungli Yamen.

Tsungli made a fortune by squeezing when he was Superintendent of the Customs in Canton. He bought the services of Li Lien Ying, and made the handsome contribution of 130,000 *taels* towards the building of the Empress-Dowager's great palace. In spite of the fact that he had been a Lieutenant-General and the President of a Board, and had been dismissed for corruption, Yung-lu restored him to office after the *coup d'état* of 1898, and put him on the Board of Punishment and in the Tsungli Yamen. Exceedingly dishonest, this man was actually head of the police during the year of the reform movement; and he made it his chief duty to arrest all reformers. With neither ability nor power, Tsungli always sides with his patron, Yung-lu, and is ever ready to swell the majority in his favour.

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